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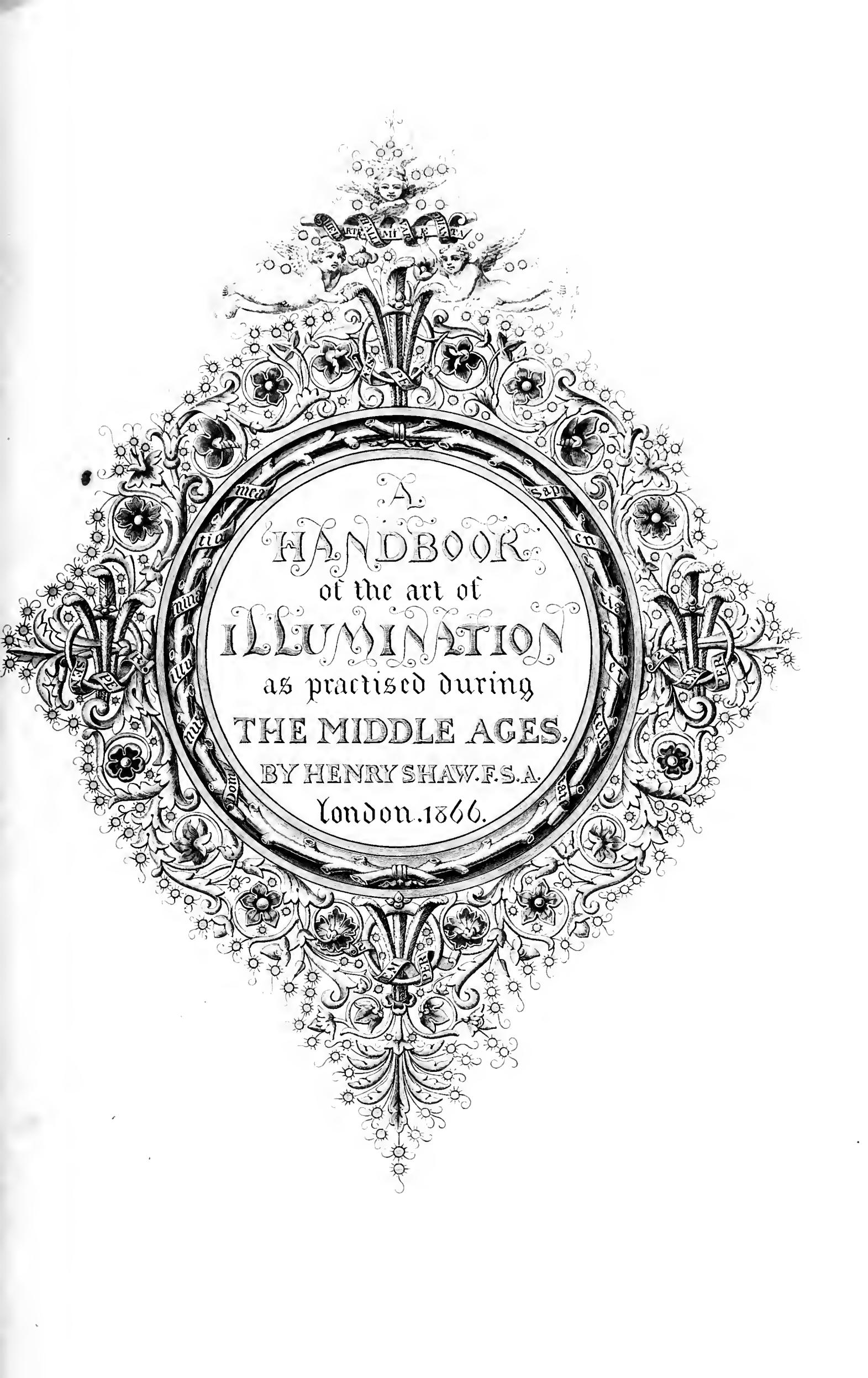
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A  
HANDBOOK  
of the art of  
ILLUMINATION  
as practised during  
THE MIDDLE AGES.

BY HENRY SHAW. F.S.A.

London. 1866.



A

HANDBOOK OF

THE ART OF ILLUMINATION,  
AS PRACTISED DURING THE  
MIDDLE AGES.

WITH A DESCRIPTION OF THE METALS, PIGMENTS, AND  
PROCESSES EMPLOYED BY THE ARTISTS  
AT DIFFERENT PERIODS.

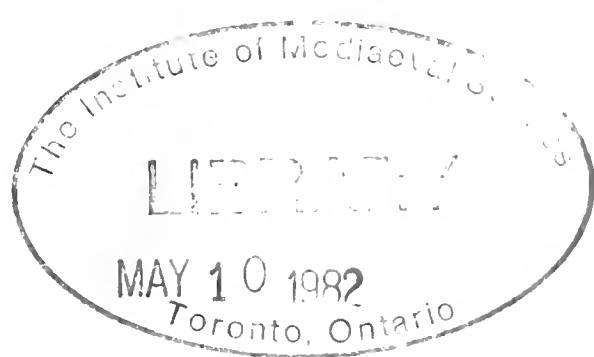
BY HENRY SHAW, F.S.A.

AUTHOR OF "ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPTS OF THE MIDDLE AGES,"  
"DRESSES AND DECORATIONS OF THE MIDDLE  
AGES," ETC. ETC.



LONDON:  
BELL AND DALDY, 186, FLEET STREET,  
AND 6, YORK STREET, COVENT GARDEN.

1866.



## P R E F A C E.



ONSIDERING the great number of books, of every degree of merit, on the Art of Illumination, which have appeared of late years both in England and on the Continent, and on many of which all the resources of chromo-lithography have been employed in attempts to produce facsimiles of the beautiful originals from which their illustrations have been taken, it may fairly be asked whether another publication on the subject is required.

For our justification we would remark that the most successful of these reproductions are too costly to be within the reach of persons of ordinary means, while they fail of being completely satisfactory ; especially when the examples chosen are those showing the highest degree of refinement.

In the early styles of this art, when flat tints only were used, and the effect of light and shade was produced by consecutive bands of colour of increasing degrees of density, proceeding from pure white, the details of the composition being made emphatic by a surrounding of red or black lines, a close approximation to the originals may be effected by means of the printing press ; but colours so produced can never have the solidity and richness of tone of those on which the hand and the brush alone have been employed.

In the finest works of the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries, the most careful gradations of colour are found ; and both the miniatures, the frames in which they are enclosed, and the other ornamental accessories gradually display, as the art emerged from the various conventional styles to a more natural mode of treatment, the most skilful blendings of the richest

and most delicate tints. The press has, hitherto, been found inadequate to the production of these refinements, and we can scarcely hope for any material improvement; as, independently of the difficulty of producing these gradations and blendings by machinery, some of the most beautiful pigments used in drawing are, when combined with the necessary varnish, of too thin a quality to be employed successfully in the process of printing, unless mixed with others, less brilliant, but of greater density.

Another objection to the employment of the press, as a means of imitating these beautiful drawings, is rather one “looming in the future,” than apparent on the first appearance of these mechanical copies. In all the styles of illumination, in all ages, gold formed a leading feature. This metal being too costly for the printer’s purpose, a substitute has been found in another, which will not bear the light. If only exposed occasionally, its comparative brilliancy may be preserved for a long period; if otherwise, it will gradually fade and become a dull heavy mass, sadly in contrast with the gay colours by which it is surrounded.

Feeling convinced, therefore, that any attempt to produce a series of plates in colours, if they are taken from the most beautiful examples of ancient illuminations, must prove both costly and unsatisfactory, we have thought it more judicious to give our illustrations through a medium that would display, at least, their refinements of drawing, and the pictorial effect of the original painting, as far as a translation into various tints could give a satisfactory impression of their gradations and contrasts.

In attempting to arrive at this result, we have considered that engravings on wood would be the best suited to our purpose. It has commonly been made an objection to this material for works of a highly finished character, that its use is an infringement on a province peculiarly suited to metal. We feel, on the contrary, that the result only is worthy of consideration; and that, if engravings on wood can be produced as nearly approaching perfection as those on metal, there can be no valid reason why the advantages which the former material offers in printing with the text should not give it a preference.

So far as line-engraving is concerned, we are satisfied that as great an

amount of delicacy can be produced on wood as on metal, and that impressions from the flexible surface of the former are richer in tone than those produced from the hard lines of the latter.

If this be the case, the question of preference is one chiefly depending on the skill of the printer; and we think our illustrations will show that the skilful operator on wood has little to fear from his rival on steel or on copper.

When we commenced our book on the "Illuminated Ornaments of the Middle Ages," in 1830, Dibdin's "Bibliographical Decameron" was the popular work on the art of illumination; and although the doctor's rhapsodical descriptions of the manuscripts from which, with considerable taste, he selected the subjects for his illustrations have, at the present time, but little critical value, the work has always maintained a high market value from the exquisite delicacy and beauty of the engravings.

At that time an impression very generally prevailed that the pigments employed by the ancient illuminators could not be procured. Our book, although it was necessarily almost limited to the decorative portions of illuminated manuscripts, from the great cost of hand-colouring, was sufficient to prove that the difficulty of imitating those beautiful productions did not arise from any want of the proper materials.

Some critics have characterized the art we are endeavouring to illustrate as a dead one; highly interesting when exhibited in its progress from infancy to maturity, but utterly unfit, after a state of suspended animation for three centuries, of forming even the ground-work of designs suited for modern purposes, as these should both present novelty of treatment, and, at the same time, be characteristic of the age we live in.

We believe that the invention of a new style in art is almost as improbable an event as the construction of a new language. As fresh discoveries are made in the different branches of natural history and the various sciences, the resources of our vernacular dialect are found utterly inadequate to the supply of names sufficiently explanatory of their individual forms or properties. These deficiencies are, therefore, supplied from other languages, ancient or modern, or by the use of compounds of which they furnish the roots.

In like manner, the leading features of bygone decorative art may be made the foundation on which to construct such variations and refinements of ornamentation as may be necessary to supply the increasing wants of modern times and the advancement of civilization.

The great number of beautiful types, both in the animal and the vegetable kingdom, within the reach of the student of art of the present day, but unknown to his predecessors, opens a wider field for the exercise of his inventive faculties than they possessed ; but in whatever shape he may connect art with nature in his compositions, his treatment will inevitably be imbued with some of the characteristics of those old examples which have served him as models while securing the preliminary, but indispensable step to excellence,—a competent knowledge of drawing.

We may also observe that, so long as the architecture of the Middle Ages is imitated, either for religious, civil, or domestic purposes, its decorative features will never be satisfactory unless they are distinguished by a treatment in harmony with the structures on which they are employed. This can only be effected by a careful study of the styles of art which prevailed contemporaneously with the ancient examples which inspired these modern compositions.

With respect to our illustrations, we may remark that they have been chosen with a view to present the prevailing peculiarities of each century in as great a variety as we could accomplish within the necessary limits of our undertaking.

103, Southampton Row,

1866.

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## THE ART OF ILLUMINATION.



Of all the relics of the middle ages which have been preserved to our times, none possess a greater amount of interest, or more varied instruction, than illuminated manuscripts. Whether we regard them, in their almost infinite variety, as an assemblage of all that is most graceful in design and gorgeous in colouring, or as illustrations of the history, the manners, and the customs of our ancestors, in their religious, their military, and their civil affairs, their pictorial truth must always make them highly valuable.

In the early ages of Christianity the schools of art were the monasteries, and the books produced were almost wholly of a religious character; chiefly copies of the Bible and the Gospels. In the richer establishments no amount of labour or cost was spared in the production of these sacred volumes, more especially the latter. The most skilful scribes were employed on the text, and the artists who produced the ornamental embellishments of the most choice examples displayed an almost incredible amount of invention, ingenuity, and patience. Nor were these precious volumes preserved in caskets unworthy of the labour bestowed on their execution, or the reverence with which they were regarded. Binding formed of plates of gold, and of silver, enriched with precious stones, with gems, and with crystals, with carvings in ivory, and the most precious enamels, were profusely employed for these costly coverings.

As education became extended from the cloister to the castle, books for amusement as well as for devotion became a natural necessity. And as the chronicles, the romances, the tales of chivalry, and of love, the classical reproductions, and the poems written for that purpose, were generally

The above letter is from a Psalter in the Cotton Collection of the British Museum, marked Galba A xviii.

embellished with pictures of the most striking scenes or events recorded in them; and as all the actors in these scenes were represented in the dresses of the time, and all the appliances and accessories were those then in use, these illustrations supply the most authentic records of the various details of religious observances, as well as those connected with military operations, and with the habits of domestic life.

As, however, the principal object of this little treatise is to point out the peculiarities of, and the changes of fashion in, decorative art, as found in illuminated manuscripts, rather than to attempt any minute description of their pictorial beauties, or uses, we need pursue the subject no further.

There can be little doubt that the art of illuminating manuscripts in gold, silver, and colours, and the processes employed on them, were of Eastern origin; indeed, the figures of the Apostles, which generally precede the books of the Gospels written by them, are Byzantine in character, as late as the eleventh century, and are frequently accompanied by Greek inscriptions.

The use of minium, or vermillion, in marking the commencement of titles, or particular words of manuscripts, is of very high antiquity, since it is commonly found in Egyptian papyri, the earliest specimens of writing known. In these papyri often occur mythological figures painted in various colours. From Egypt the practice may have passed to Greece and Rome, though previously to the Christian era no evidence exists of the mode of writing manuscripts in either country. In the rolls of papyri discovered at Herculaneum, written in the early part of the first century, no trace of any ornament is found; but we have the evidence of Ovid and Pliny that the Romans, long before the destruction of Pompeii, were accustomed to rubricate their manuscripts, and adorn them with pictures.

The process of burnishing gold and silver was familiar to the oriental nations from the most remote antiquity, and it is not unreasonable to suppose that the Greeks acquired from Egypt or India the art of thus ornamenting manuscripts. Among the later Greeks it became so common that the scribes, or artists in gold, formed a distinct class. The luxury thus introduced was augmented by writing on vellum stained of a purple or rose colour; the earliest instance of which is recorded by Julius Capitulinus, in his life of the Emperor Maximinus the younger, to whom his mother made a present of the poems of Homer written on purple vellum in letters of gold. This took place at the commencement of the third century. The copy of Virgil in the library of the Vatican has been attributed by the best palæographers to the same century. This volume is enriched with miniatures, many of which are engraved in D'Agincourt's "Histoire de l'Art par les Monuments."

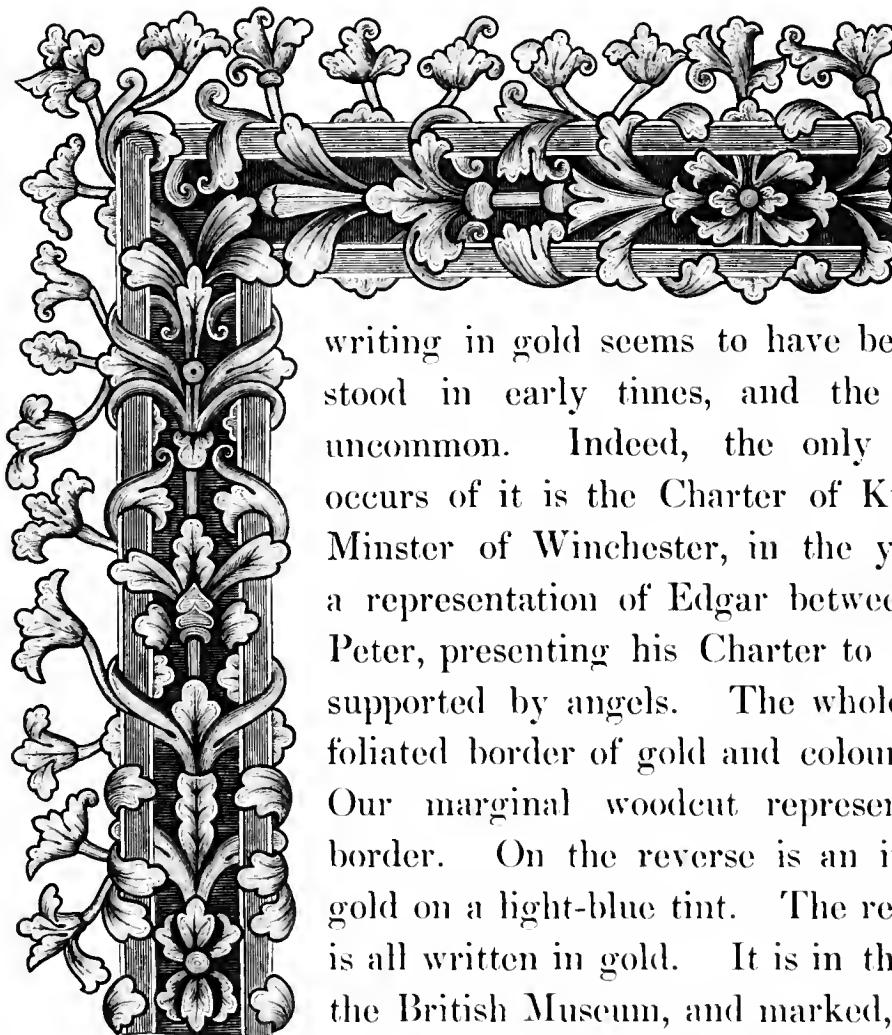
The employment of purple vellum seems to have been discontinued for about a hundred years, but was revived about the end of the fourth century, as we find from a well-known passage in St. Jerome, though confined solely to copies of the Scriptures, and devotional books written for the libraries of princes, and the service of monasteries.

The celebrated Codex Argenteus of Ulphilas, written in silver and gold letters on a purple ground, about A.D. 360, is perhaps the most ancient existing specimen of this magnificent calligraphy; after which may be mentioned the copy of Genesis, at Vienna, the Psalter of St. German des Près, and the fragment of the New Testament in the Cottonian Library of the British Museum, marked Titus C xv. All these were executed in the fifth or sixth centuries. This taste for gold and purple manuscripts would seem not to have reached England before the close of the seventh century, when Wilfrid, Archbishop of York, enriched his church with a copy of the Gospels thus adorned; and it is described by Eddis, his biographer, who lived about that period, as "almost a miracle, and before that time unheard of in this part of the world." In the eighth and ninth centuries, the art of staining vellum seems to have declined, and the colour is no longer the bright and beautiful purple, violet, or rose colour, of the preceding centuries. It is rare also to meet with a volume stained throughout; the artist contenting himself with colouring a certain portion, such as the title, preface, or canon of the mass.

An unique example of a manuscript written and illuminated on gold grounds on both sides of the leaf is preserved in the British Museum, Additional MS. 5111. It is a mere fragment of only two leaves, and these have been miserably cut down to perhaps half their original size, and in other respects are much injured by neglect; but, notwithstanding these defects, they must certainly be reckoned among the most precious remains of early calligraphy and illumination in existence. On the gold ground of these leaves are painted columns and arches for the reception of the Eusebian canons, most elegantly filled up with ornaments and patterns in red, blue, and green; whilst in the upper part are introduced small heads of the Evangelists, enclosed in circles, executed in a most masterly style of art. These fragments formerly belonged to one of the convents of Mount Athos, and are supposed to be of the sixth century.\*

Manuscripts written in letters of gold on white vellum are chiefly confined to the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries. Of these, the Bible, and Hours of Charles the Bald, preserved in the Musée des Souverains at Paris,

\* These leaves have been figured in Shaw's "Illuminated Ornaments of the Middle Ages."



and the Gospels of the Harleian Collection, No. 2788, are probably the finest examples extant. In England the art of

writing in gold seems to have been imperfectly understood in early times, and the instances of it very uncommon. Indeed, the only remarkable one that occurs of it is the Charter of King Edgar to the new Minster of Winchester, in the year 966. Prefixed is a representation of Edgar between the Virgin and St. Peter, presenting his Charter to Christ, who sits above, supported by angels. The whole is within an elegant foliated border of gold and colours on a purple ground. Our marginal woodcut represents one-fourth of this border. On the reverse is an inscription in letters of gold on a light-blue tint. The remainder of the volume is all written in gold. It is in the Cotton Collection of the British Museum, and marked, Vespasian A viii.

Writing in gold was less employed in the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries, than in earlier times; but it again came into use in the fourteenth, particularly in devotional books for persons of rank. It then exhibits a very inferior appearance to the examples of ancient art, and the gold seems to be applied, not in a liquid state, but in leaves. Among the Greeks the usage of writing whole pages in gold continued to the latest period of the empire.

The use of gold and silver is found in oriental manuscripts of all ages. In the Sloane Collection of the British Museum, Nos. 2835-2838, are rolls in the language of Thibet, written in gold and silver on dark blue paper; and among the Arabians and Persians, examples of later manuscripts, written and ornamented in gold and silver, are found in abundance, and display an amount of beauty and minuteness so truly wonderful as to surpass the effort of any European artist.

In the earliest manuscripts of the western world, the whole of the text was written in capitals, and when coloured was of a much simpler character than that which began to mark those of the end of the seventh century. From the eighth to the eleventh, in Greek and Latin manuscripts, initial letters of a large character occur at the commencement of books and chapters, fancifully composed of human figures, animals, birds, fish, flowers, &c.

These letters were called by the Benedictines “historiées,” because they often bear reference to, or illustrate, the text to which they are affixed.

The Irish, Hiberno-Saxon, school of illumination merits a distinct notice, since it is of a peculiar and marked type, and characterized by a design and execution not found in manuscripts of other nations. It is founded, doubtless, on oriental types, as the same character of interlacing may be met with in the earliest Eastern metal-work, though less intricate, and consisting only of bands crossing each other, and enriched merely with leaves, instead of being chiefly composed of birds, snakes, dragons, &c, as we find in these illuminations. The exquisite taste, however, of the delicate colours employed to give distinctness to the various details of these most elaborate designs is altogether original.

The chief characteristics of this style are, extreme intricacy of pattern, interlacing of knots, in a diagonal, or square form, sometimes interwoven with animals or birds, and terminating in heads of serpents; to which may be added, the use of lines composed of red dots, and sometimes of green, round the edge of the larger letters.

The most extraordinary example of the skill of the artists of this school, which appears to have been of Irish origin, and practised in that country as early as the fifth century, is the Book of Kells, so called from having been preserved in the Great Abbey Church at Kells, in the diocese of Meath. It was saved from destruction by James Usher, who was Bishop of Meath from the year 1621 to 1624, and was found in his library, which, having been confiscated during the Commonwealth, was granted by Charles II. to Trinity College, Dublin, with which body it has since remained.\*

This manuscript, and another called the Book of Durrow, are copies of the Gospels, said to be in the handwriting of St. Columba. St. Columba is spoken of as an indefatigable scribe, who, from his early youth, devoted himself to the work of multiplying copies of the Psalms, Gospels, and other portions of the Scriptures; and there is an interesting passage in the annals of Ulster, A.D. 552, where St. Columba is mentioned as the possessor of a remarkably fine copy of the Gospels: and again, in the same annals, A.D. 1006, a book is mentioned as the book of St. Columba, which, if it were so, must have been in existence upwards of 411 years at the time the record was made.

Another great copy of the Gospels was preserved in the Cathedral of

\* For our notice of these rare Irish manuscripts we are indebted to a poem called “The Cromlech of Howth,” by Samuel Ferguson, Q.C., M.R.S.A., with Illuminations from the Books of Kells and Durrow, and drawings from Nature, by S. M.; with Notes of Celtic ornamental art, revised by George Petrie, LL.D.

Kildare up to the twelfth century. This has been described by Giraldus Cambrensis, who went to Ireland, as secretary to Prince John, in A.D. 1185, and his account of it might have been written as a description of the Book of Kells itself, so exactly does it apply to that book.

“Of all the wonders of Kildare,” he says, “I have found nothing more wonderful than that marvellous book, written in the time of the Virgin (St. Brigid), and, as they say, at the dictation of an angel. The book contains the Concordance of the Evangelists according to St. Jerome ; every page of which is filled with divers figures, most accurately marked out with various colours. Here you behold a magic face divinely drawn ; there the mystical forms of the Evangelists, each having sometimes six, sometimes four, and sometimes two wings ; here an eagle, there a calf ; there again a human face, or a lion, and other figures of infinite variety, so closely wrought together, that if you looked carelessly at them, they would seem rather like a uniform blot than an exquisite interweaving of figures, exhibiting no skill or art, where all is skill and perfection of art. But, if you look closely, with all the acuteness of sight that you can command, and examine the inmost secrets of that wondrous art, you will discover such delicate, such subtle, such fine and closely wrought lines, twisted and interwoven in such intricate knots, and adorned with such fresh and brilliant colours, that you will readily acknowledge the whole to have been the result of angelic, rather than human skill. The more frequently I beheld it, the more diligently I examined it, the more numerous are the beauties I discover in it, the more I am lost in admiration of it.”

As an instance of the wonderful delicacy and accuracy of the drawings in the Book of Kells, Mr. Westwood examined one of them by the aid of a microscope, and counted, in the space of a quarter of an inch, 158 interlace-ments, of a slender riband pattern, formed of white lines edged with black ones, upon a dark ground, without detecting a false line, or an irregular interlacement.

But whatever doubt may be felt as to the exact date of the Book of Kells, none can be entertained as to the age of the Book of Durrow, the writing of which is also ascribed to St. Columba, and in which the illuminations are in the same style of art, though inferior in beauty of execution ; for in this manuscript we find the usual request of the Irish scribe for a prayer from the reader, expressed in words of which the following is a translation :—“I pray thy blessedness, O holy presbyter Patrick, that whosoever shall take this book in his hands may remember the writer, Colomba, who have myself written this Gospel in the space of twelve days, by the Grace of our Lord.”

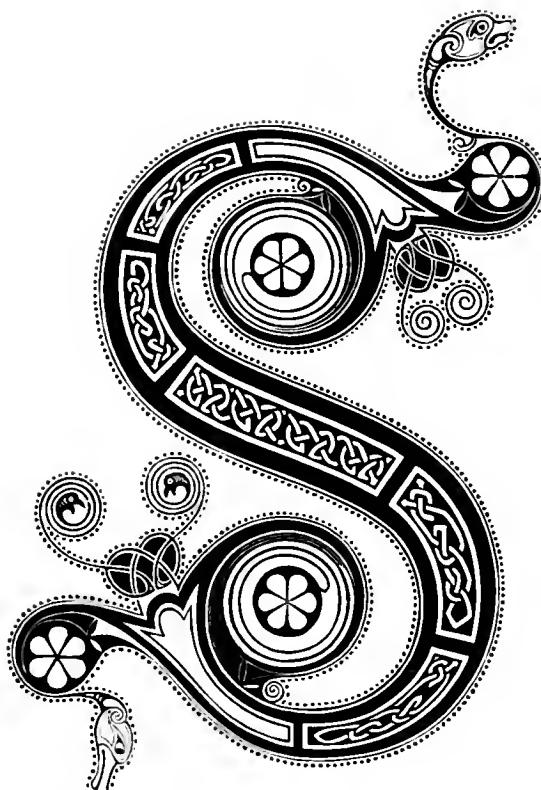
In the seventh century we find this style of illumination carried, by the Irish missionaries who followed St. Columba, to Iona, and hence to Lindisfarne, by the companions of Aidan, who was made Bishop of that See, A. D. 635. He obtained from Oswald, Prince of Northumbria, leave to have his episcopal residence at Lindisfarne, where he founded a monastery and college similar to that at Iona.

In that monastery was produced the celebrated copy of St. Cuthbert's Gospels, commonly called "The Durham Book," now deposited in the British Museum.\* The drawings in this extraordinary volume are second only to the Book of Kells in their wonderful elaboration, delicacy, and beauty. It is a folio volume, containing the four Gospels in the Latin version of St. Jerome, to which are prefixed, as usual, the Canons of Eusebius. At the beginning of each Gospel are paintings representing one of the Evangelists, and a tessellated cross. These are followed by large illuminated capital letters; and many small ones, equally rich in character, are found at the heads of various chapters.† Between the lines of the text is introduced a Saxon Gloss, of the highest value, from its containing so early a specimen of the Northumbrian dialect, and at the close of the volume a note is added by the Saxon scribe, from which we learn its history. This manuscript seems to have been written and illuminated in honour of St. Cuthbert, by Eadfrith, Bishop of Lindisfarne, who succeeded to that See in the year 698, and died in 721. His successor, Æthelwald, caused it to be splendidly bound, and adorned with gold and gems; which was executed under his direction by Bilfrith, who, according to Simon of Durham, was "aurificis arte præcipuus." This precious volume passed into the Monastery of Durham, where it remained till the time of the Reformation, when it was despoiled of its cover for the sake of the gold and jewels which adorned it.

In noticing this manuscript it is most interesting to observe the extraordinary purity and beauty of the pigments and materials employed on it. The vellum is of admirable quality, and the colours are almost free from change, except, in a few instances, on those pages which have been most frequently exposed, or the least carefully treated; while the ink has a richness and fulness of tone not to be found in modern works, and remains so fresh in appearance that it is difficult to imagine that the scribe who used it has been in his grave between eleven and twelve hundred years.

\* Cotton Collection, Nero D iv.

† The complete page preceding the Gospel of St. Matthew has been copied, and carefully coloured in close imitation of the original drawing, in "Shaw's Illuminated Ornaments of the Middle Ages."



seventh century.

It is worthy of remark, that in Ireland the same characteristics were continued in illuminated manuscripts to a comparatively late period, but in a gradually debased mode of manipulation. The earliest examples are almost invariably the finest.

On wayside crosses, on works in metal, in carvings on ivory and on wood, examples of this style of art are constantly met with; and in manuscripts of France, Germany, and the Northern Countries, evident traces of it may be found.

The patronage of Charlemagne and his grandson, Charles the Bald, caused a great number of beautiful volumes to be executed during the eighth and ninth centuries.

Specimens from most of the fine examples of this time now remaining in France have been most carefully copied in the great work of the Count de Bastard.† It is much to be regretted that that magnificent undertaking was not continued, or that the specimens given should have been so strictly confined to early examples, instead of giving a due proportion of those showing a more advanced state of art.

\* Cotton MS. Vesp. A i.

† "Peintures des Manuscrits depuis le Huitième Siècle jusqu'à la fin du Seizième."



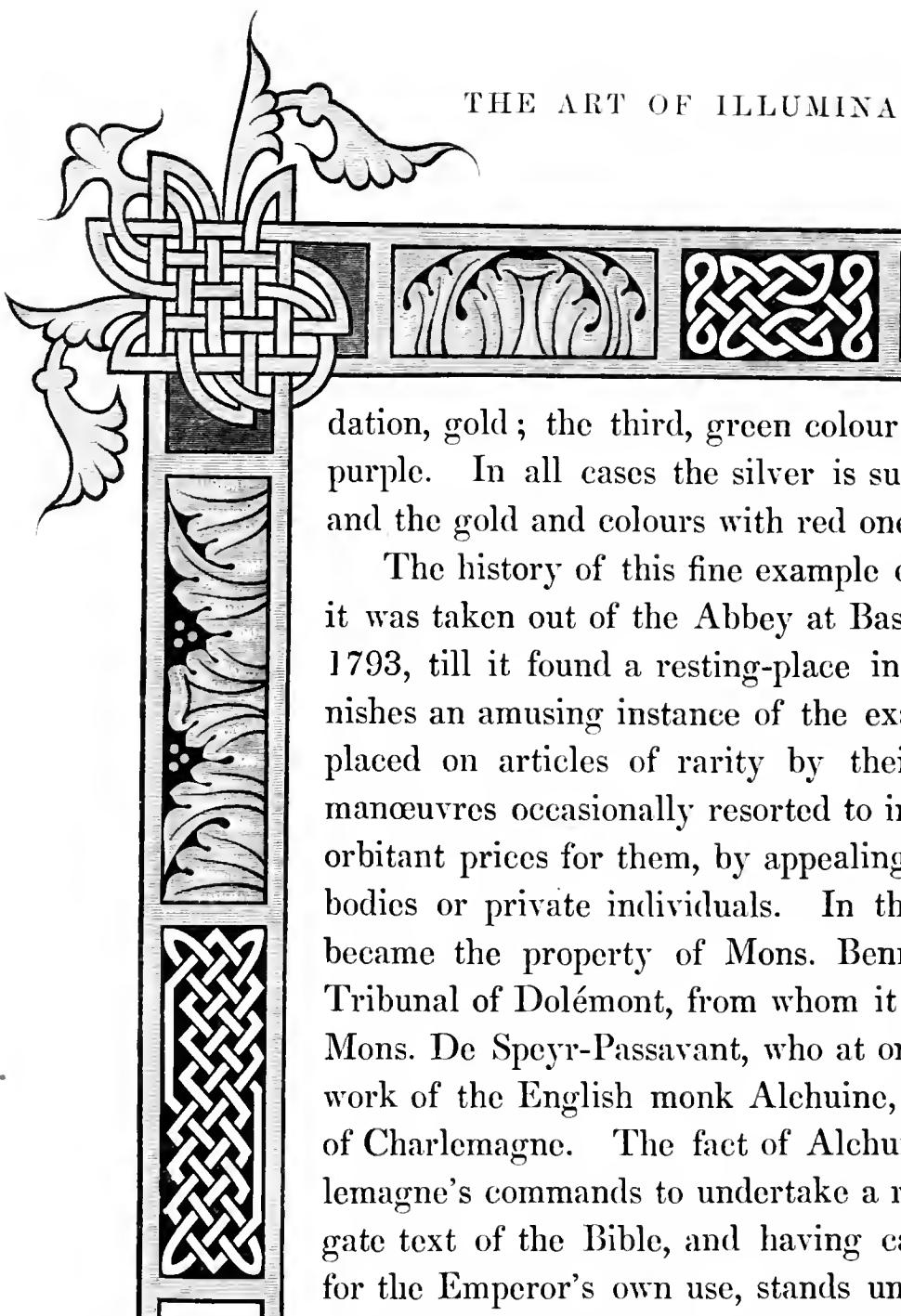




PAGE has been copied, in our next engraving, from a magnificent Bible in the British Museum, formerly attributed to the English monk Alchune, who entered the service of Charlemagne about the year 782, and continued in it, with a

short interval, till his death in 804. There is, however, no evidence in the volume itself to support this opinion, and the conclusion now generally arrived at by those who have carefully compared it with contemporary works is, that its date is not earlier than Charlemagne's successor, Charles le Chauve, or the latter part of the ninth century. This book is of the largest folio size, measuring twenty-two inches in height, by fifteen inches in width, and consists of 409 leaves of very fine vellum, in a beautiful and distinct minuscule letter in double columns, the height of which is fifteen inches and the breadth four inches and five-eighths. At the commencement is the title to Jerome's "Epistle to Paulinus," written in capital letters in gold, nearly an inch in height, on bands of purple, which are enclosed in a border surrounding the entire page, composed of gold interlaced ornament, in the style usual in the eighth and ninth centuries, within an edge of green on gold, with eight smaller interlaced ornaments in silver in the corners and intermediate spaces. The Epistle follows, with a large F, "Frater Ambrosius," twelve inches in height, from which our engraving has been copied. This is succeeded by a series of pictures in the rude and coarse manner of the time, and a number of cleverly designed borders and initial letters.

Our initial is from a Bible presented to Charles le Chauve by the Count Vivien, Abbé Commendatore de St. Martin de Tours.



The flat bands forming the skeleton of our letter, and all the lightest tints of the ornament, represent silver; the next

gradation, gold; the third, green colour; and the deepest, blue or purple. In all cases the silver is surrounded with black lines, and the gold and colours with red ones.

The history of this fine example of early art, from the time it was taken out of the Abbey at Basle by the French troops in 1793, till it found a resting-place in the British Museum, furnishes an amusing instance of the exaggerated value sometimes placed on articles of rarity by their owners, and the artful manœuvres occasionally resorted to in the hope of realizing exorbitant prices for them, by appealing to the credulity of public bodies or private individuals. In the year of its abduction it became the property of Mons. Bennot, Vice-president of the Tribunal of Dolémont, from whom it was purchased in 1822 by Mons. De Speyr-Passavant, who at once proclaimed it to be the work of the English monk Alchuine, and prepared for the use of Charlemagne. The fact of Alchuine having received Charlemagne's commands to undertake a recension of Jerome's Vulgate text of the Bible, and having caused a copy to be written for the Emperor's own use, stands undisputed, on the authority of Alchuine himself, corroborated by the testimony of other writers. The evidence, however, that Mons. De Speyr-Passavant produced to prove the identity of this volume with the Bible prepared for Charlemagne proved wholly fictitious. Nevertheless, with an assumed confidence in its veracity, he took it to Paris in December, 1828, with the intention of selling it to the French Government, at first at the price of 60,000 francs, then at 48,000 francs, and then at 42,000 francs; but the price appeared so excessive, that it was finally resolved not to buy it, and its proprietor, in May, 1830, took it back to Basle.

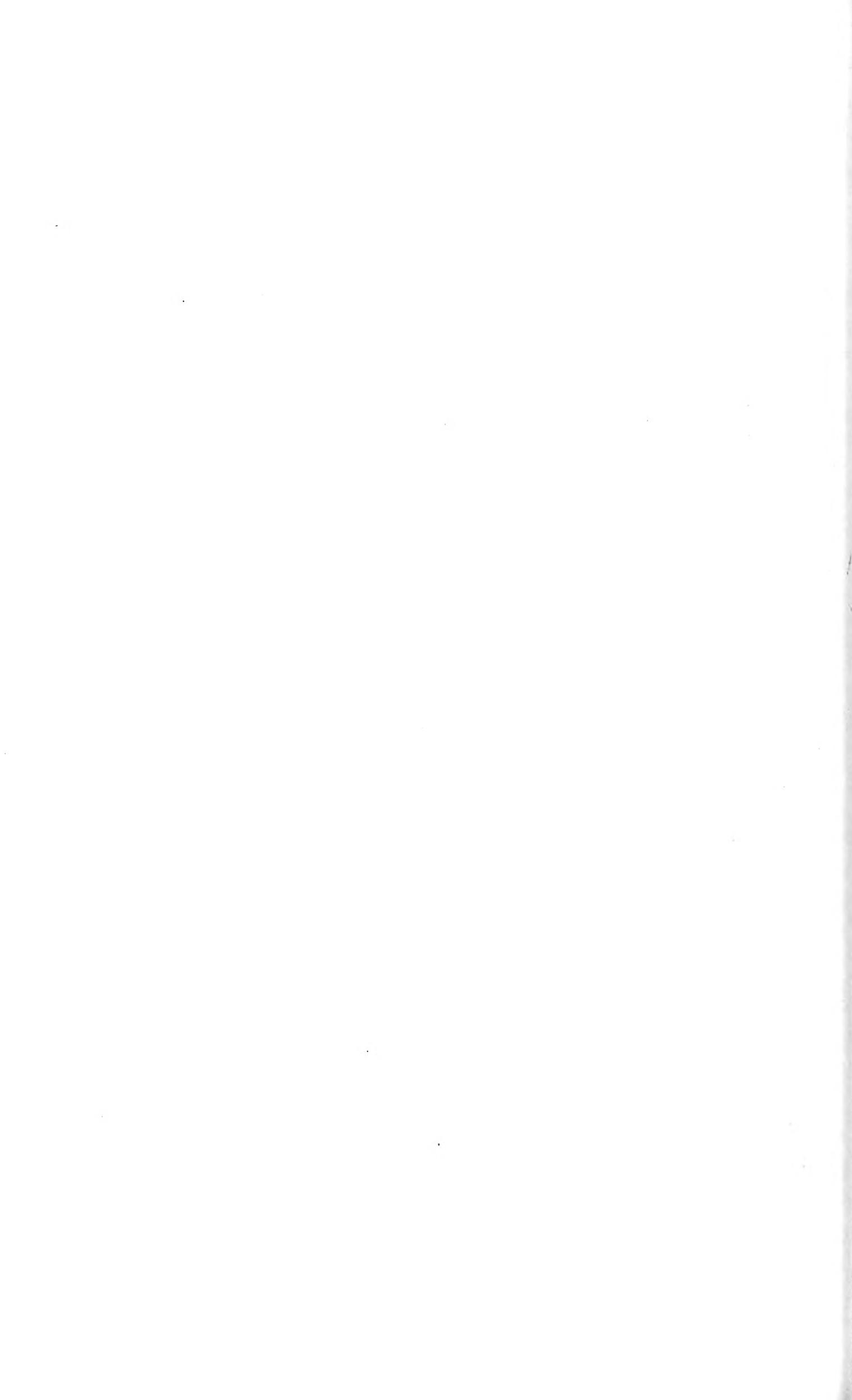
Application was next made to Lord Stuart de Rothesay, English ambassador in Paris; then to the late Duke of Sussex; afterwards to the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Archbishop of York, and Viscount Althorp,

The above portion of a frame is taken from a copy of the Gospels of the ninth century from the cathedral at Le Mans, but now in the Bibliothèque du Roi at Paris. The bands are of gold with red outlines. The interlacings in the centres are white on black, and the leaves alternately a bright green, and light purple.









in England; to the Baron Reiffenberg, in Belgium, and to the Bishop of Beauvais, in France, protesting to each he had given him, or his country, the preference. Having totally failed in France, in January, 1836, he set out for England, and offered the Bible to the trustees of the British Museum, first at the price of £12,000, then £8000, then £6500, which, he declared, was an immense sacrifice! At length, finding he could not part with his manuscript on terms so absurd, he resolved to sell it by public auction, and accordingly, on the 27th of April, 1836, the Bible was knocked down by Mr. Evans for the sum of £1500, but for the proprietor himself, as there was not one real bidding for it. Overtures were then again made to the trustees of the British Museum, and the manuscript finally became the property of the nation for the comparatively moderate sum of £750.

In our national library may be seen another remarkably fine specimen of French art of the ninth century.\* It is a portion of a Bible written for Charles the Bald, the remainder of which is in the Bibliothèque Nationale, at Paris. The initial letters in these fragments are peculiarly elegant, both in their general forms and details. In the minute interlacings embodied in them, they partake largely of the Anglo-Saxon character.



UR initial and the letter L on the succeeding page are taken from a small copy of the Gospels in the British Museum,† written in the tenth century. Each book is preceded by a large capital within a frame, similar to the latter, and each chapter by a smaller one, similar to the former, showing an immense variety of very elegant designs, and nearly a complete alphabet. They are all boldly outlined in red, the interlacing bands of which they are composed, and the flat ones enclosing the ornamental portions of the frames are of gold. The colours employed on the letters are green, red, and blue,

\* Additional MS. 7551.

† Egerton MS. No. 608.

according to the gradations shown in the engraving.\* The grounds between the large letters and the frames are purple.

One of the most interesting tenth-century manuscripts now remaining is in the British Museum,† and generally known as the Coronation Book. It would appear from the following inscription in the volume, “**☩ Coda Rex**,” and “**☩ Methild Mater Rex**,” that this volume was made in Germany for the Emperor Otho and his mother, Mathilda, and presented to Athelstan, whose sister the Emperor married. It was on this copy of the Gospels that, henceforth, our Anglo-Saxon kings took the coronation oath, and it would appear, from an interpolated leaf of the time, that it was used as late as the coronation of Henry the Sixth.

Among the Anglo-Saxons, towards the close of the tenth century, a style of ornament prevailed which must be considered as peculiar to themselves, and which for boldness, correctness of design, and richness, cannot be surpassed by any works executed on the Continent at that time. The magnificent Benedictional belonging to the Duke of Devonshire,‡ written and illuminated between 963 and 970, is alone sufficient to prove the truth of this assertion. This manuscript was the ancient Benedictional of the see of Winchester, as we learn from the metrical dedication prefixed, in letters of gold. *Æthelwald*, Bishop of Winchester, commanded a certain monk, subject to him, to write this book; he ordered also to be made in it many arches elegantly decorated and filled up with various ornamental pictures expressed in divers beautiful colours and gold.

The name of *Æthelwald* is enrolled in the calendar of English saints; and we have his life written, as it seems, by one of his disciples.

This great prelate co-operated with Dunstan and Oswald in reforming the monks and in restoring learning. He is celebrated as the re-founder of the monasteries of Ely, Peterborough, and Thorney; and among the many ecclesiastical buildings which he erected or rebuilt was his own cathedral church.

This manuscript is a folio on vellum, measuring eleven inches and a-half by eight inches and a-half, and contains one hundred and nineteen leaves, of a thick and soft quality, in an extraordinary state of preservation. The capital letters, some of which are very large, are uniformly of gold; and the beginnings and endings of some benedictions, together with the titles,

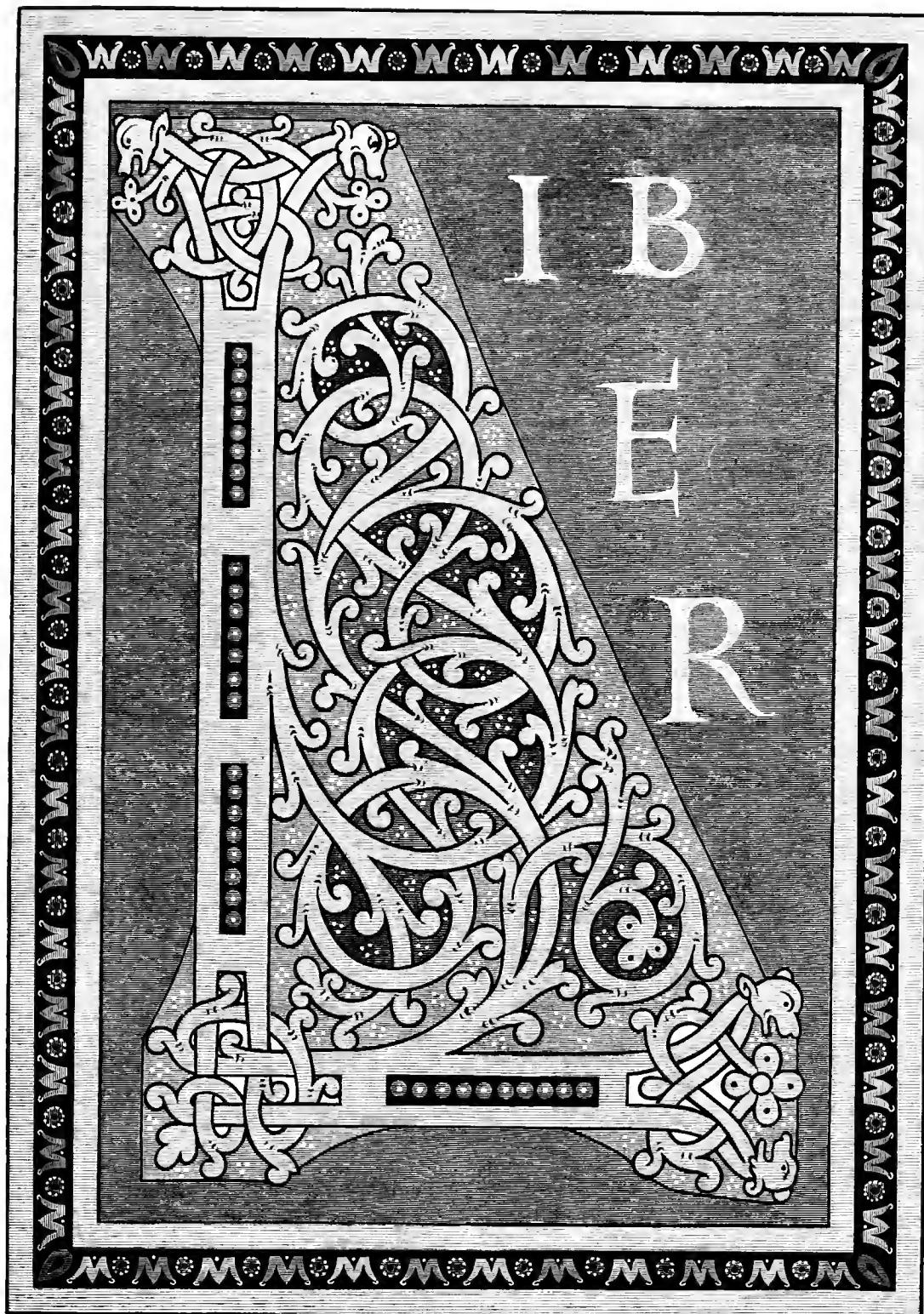
\* In the following engravings, whenever flat tints are shown in gradations, the lightest is intended to represent gold, the next green, the following red, and the deepest, blue, or sometimes purple.

† *Tiberius A ii.*

‡ The drawings in this extraordinary volume were all carefully engraved in volume twenty-four of the *Archaeologia*.









are in gold or red letters. The book is illuminated with thirty different miniatures, besides thirteen pages highly illuminated, some with arches on ornamental columns; others decorated with rectangular borders composed of flowers and devices; each page, where the opening of some principal benediction occurs, being in capital letters of gold; and where a miniature or painting fronts a decorated page, the arches, circles, or borders of both pages are made to correspond.

Facing the benediction of the third Sunday in Advent is a miniature of the coming of the Son of Man in triumph. The other miniatures are as follows: the Martyrdom of St. Stephen; St. John the Evangelist; the Consultation of the Magi; their Offering; the Baptism of Christ; the Presentation in the Temple; the Entry into Jerusalem; the Maries visiting the Tomb after the Resurrection; Christ appearing to his Apostles; the Ascension; the Descent of the Holy Ghost; the Holy Trinity; St. Ætheldrytha; Christ in Glory; the Nativity of St. John the Baptist; St. Peter and St. Paul; St. Swithin; St. Benedict; the Death of the Blessed Virgin; and the Bishop blessing the people—this last miniature is unfinished, and parts are in red outline.

The whole of these miniatures have been very carefully engraved in the twenty-fourth volume of the “Archæologia;” but the best engravings can convey but a faint idea of the beauty and brilliancy of the drawings.

The Benedictional of Archbishop Robert, in the public library at Rouen, the Psalter in the Arundel Collection, No. 155, the Gospels, Royal I D ix, and the Cottonian Psalter, Tiberius C vi, all show evident marks of having proceeded from the same school of design, which, in all probability, was principally established at Winchester, from which place we know that most of the above manuscripts have been derived.

The latter manuscript has suffered severely from the disastrous fire, which, in the year 1731, destroyed so many treasures in the Cottonian Collection. It is a short folio, towards the close of the tenth century, and now consists of one hundred and thirteen leaves, but is imperfect at the end. It contains the Psalter of St. Jerome’s Version, accompanied by a Saxon gloss, with a prayer introduced at the end of each Psalm. Prefixed are various tables, short theoretical treatises, &c, and (what forms the most interesting portion of the volume, in point of art) a series of outline drawings, slightly touched with blue, green, and red, representing various scriptural subjects, executed with great skill, and presenting very curious illustrations of the costume of the period. Among the most remarkable is an allegorical figure of Death, represented as a human figure, with long hair and wings; the Creation of the world; the Crucifixion; the fight of St. Michael and the dragon; and David playing on the harp.



O finer work of that school is perhaps in existence than one still remaining at Winchester, though little known, and from which we have copied the accompanying capital letter. It is a copy of the Bible of a large folio size, in three volumes, containing numerous pictures, and elaborate capital letters, some of which run down the whole length of the folio page. What makes it most interesting

as a work of art is, that, from being left unfinished, it shows us illumination in every stage of the process which it had to go through.\*

Our illustration has been taken from a very fine volume in the British Museum, called the Gospels of Canute. The foliated frames at the commencement of each are admirable examples of the characteristics of this style of art. Before the commencement of the Gospel of St. Mark is a certificate in Anglo-Saxon, of which the following is a translation:—"In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ here is written Canute the king's name. He is our beloved Lord worldwards, and our spiritual brother Godwards, and Harold, this king's brother, Thorch our brother, Kortoku our brother, Thuri our brother." On the next leaf is the entry of a Charter of this king in the same language. These entries may have led to the tradition of its having been the property of King Canute, and it is probable that he presented it to the cathedral of Canterbury upon being received into that church.

Illuminations of the twelfth century are more easily distinguished than those of any other period. Manuscripts of an immense size were then produced, and the principal capital letters were frequently from twelve to eighteen inches in length, and sometimes longer, occupying, in fact, the greater part of the pages on which they appear.

\* The light tints of our letter represent green; the studs and dots, red; and the letter itself, a deep blue colour.



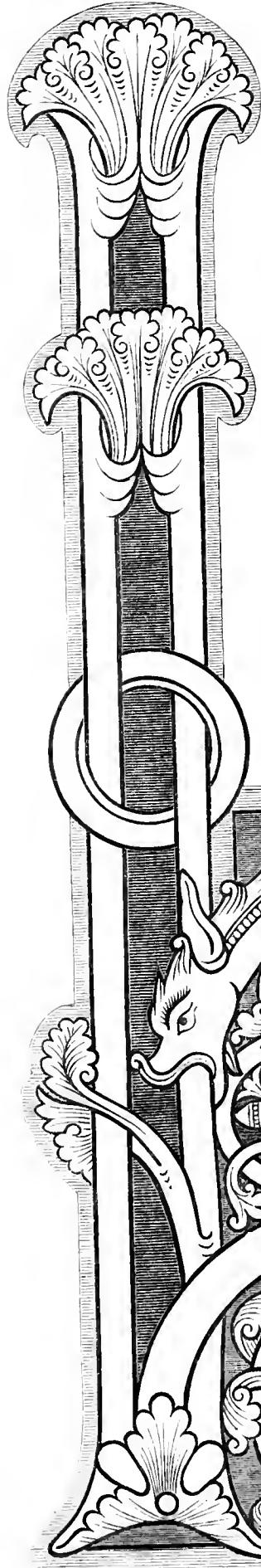


sc̄m  
MARCUM.  
NITI  
EVANGE  
LII DNI  
IH̄VXPI  
FILI D̄SI  
Cui īcriptum est multa  
propheta:





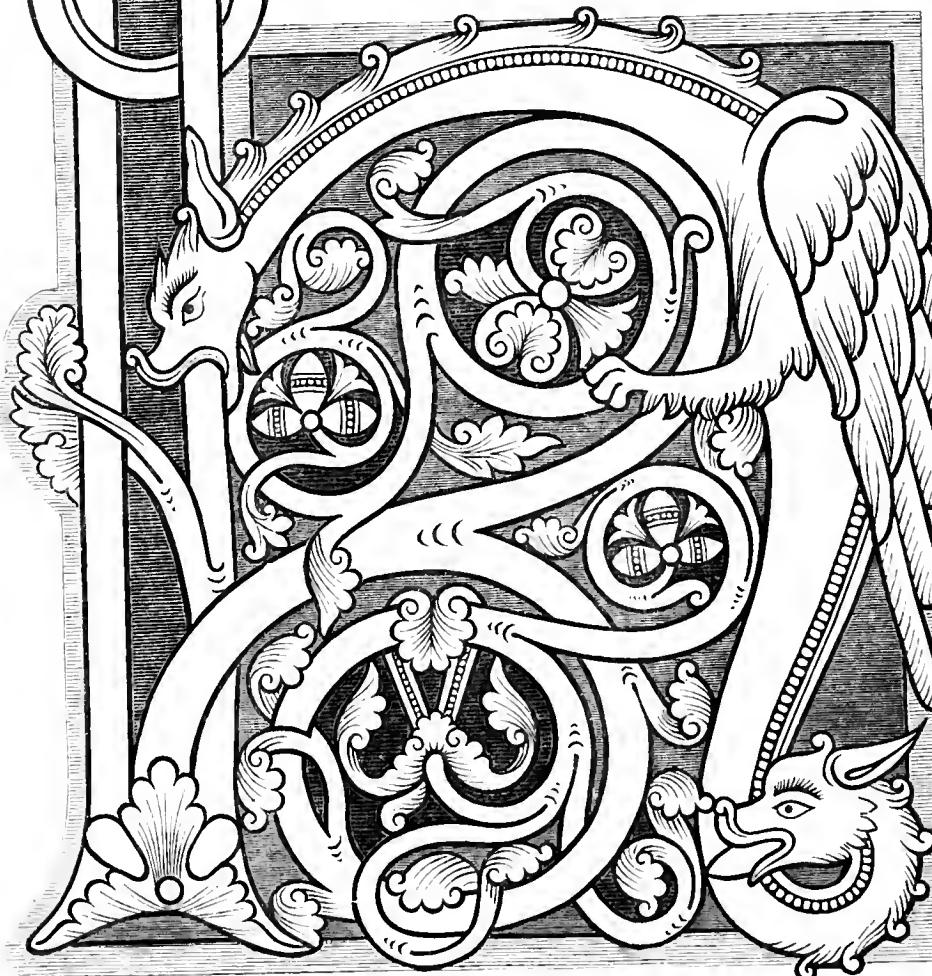
IMPLICITY, elegance, and accuracy of drawing were their leading characteristics. They were usually formed of continuous or interlacing bands, or scrolls, terminating in conventional foliage and flowers, commonly proceeding from the mouth of a dragon, or other monster, and sometimes from a human mask. Two distinct modes of treatment were employed on the borders and large initial letters of this time. In the one, the outlines are all red, with the details rounded by fine delicate lines of the same colour, the whole being relieved by backgrounds of blue, green, and yellow. The letter H on the next page is an example of this style of art. In the other, these bands, branches, and flowers, were coloured in gradations of the richest tints, heightened on the outer edge with pure white, and made distinct by a bold black outline. The ground was sometimes formed of various colours almost equally distributed, sometimes partially of gold, and often wholly of that precious metal. Occasionally the figure of the prophet, apostle, or historian of the text following is introduced, commonly having a scroll in his right hand bearing an inscription. It is worthy of remark that the figures introduced at this time into manuscripts show a great advance over preceding ones, both in drawing and colouring; though still quaint in style, the heads are remarkable for sincere and truthful expression, and the draperies for the broad and simple arrangement of their folds, and the sober and harmonious character of the tints employed on them. Among the finest examples we have met with of twelfth-century illumination are those contained in three enormous volumes in the British Museum, Harleian 2800-2802. It is a *Passionale*, or collection of lives of saints, written towards the close of the century, in double columns, on vellum, in the large character which about that time began to be used, and which forms the link between the round open letter of the preceding century and a-half, and the square or Gothic letter of a later period. From the great number of German saints introduced into these volumes, and from the legend of Count Ludovic, inserted at the close of the second, we may conclude that the work was written for the monastery of Arnstein, situated in the diocese of Treves, on the river Lahn, about a mile above Coblenz, in which monastic house, as appears by a memorandum at the end of the last volume, it was still preserved in 1464. The legend of Count Ludovic, the founder of this monastery, is entirely historical, and supplies some valuable facts respecting the history of the foundation. From a religious feeling, at that period very prevalent among



the nobility, the Count and his wife Guda de Bonneburch, in the year 1139, converted their castle, called, from its lofty situation, the “Eagle’s Rock,” into a religious receptacle for twelve monks of the Premonstratensian order, and consecrated it to St. Mary and St. Nicholas, under the governance of Abbot Godfrid, a secular priest of Magdeburg, who was confirmed by Adalbert, Archbishop of Treves. The Count himself assumed the monastic habit at the same time, and died in 1185, forty-seven years after the foundation. The volumes in question were therefore probably written about the year 1190. The following plate contains specimens of pilasters copied from richly-coloured examples in a series of double arcades at the commencement of the first volume, within which are the calendars.

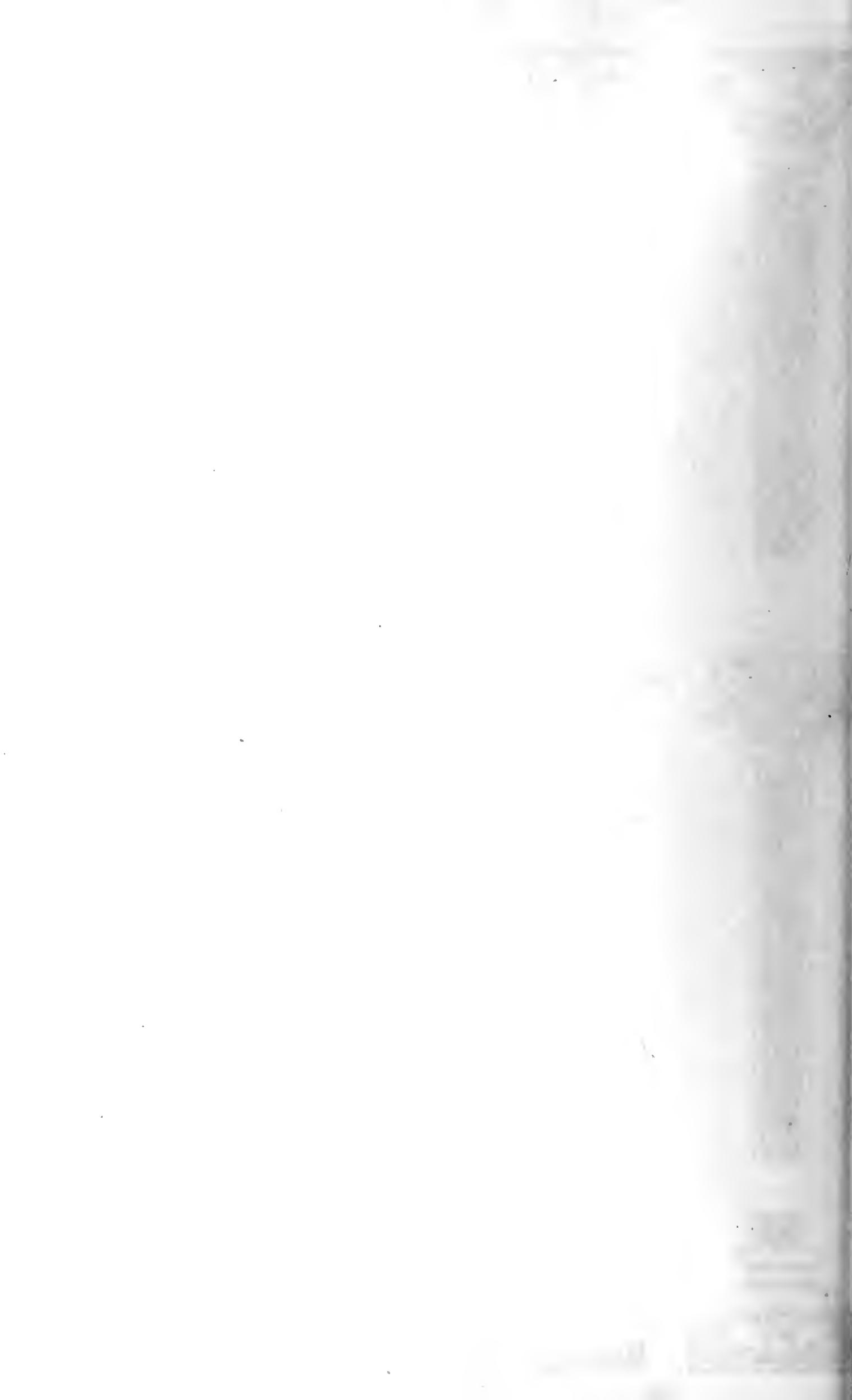
An example of nearly the same period and style as this *Passionale* is the copy of a Bible (MS. Harl. 2803) in the vulgate version, comprised in two very large folio volumes,

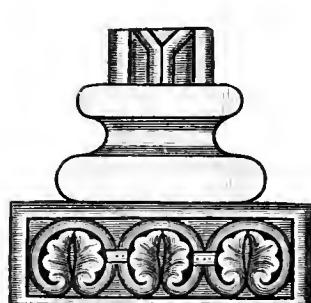
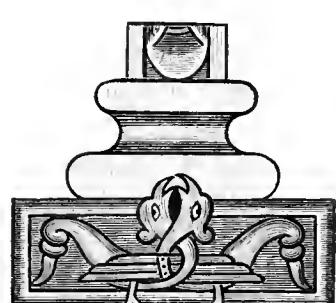
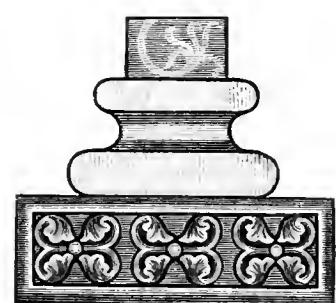
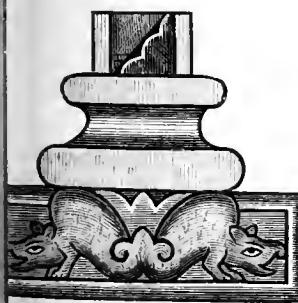
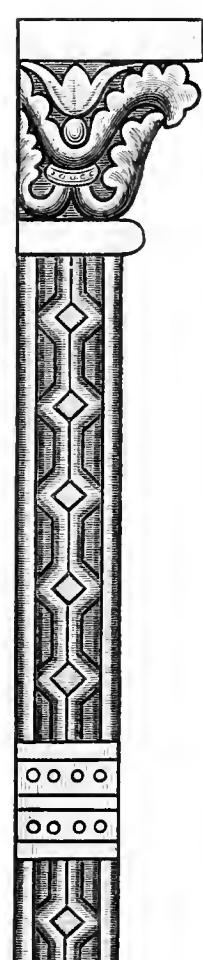
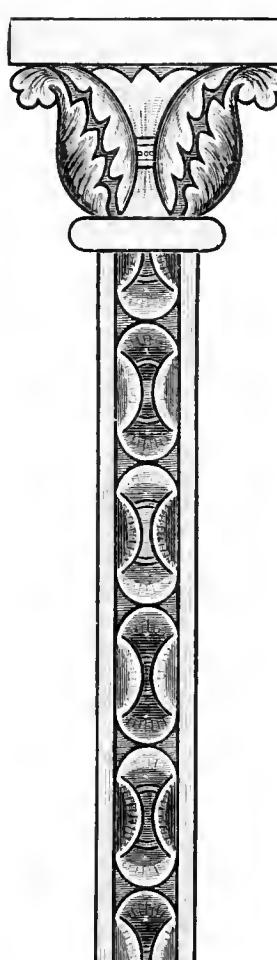
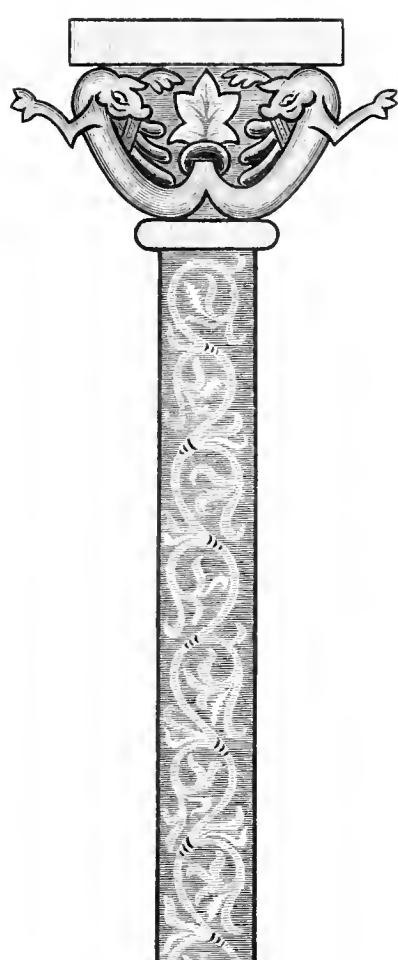
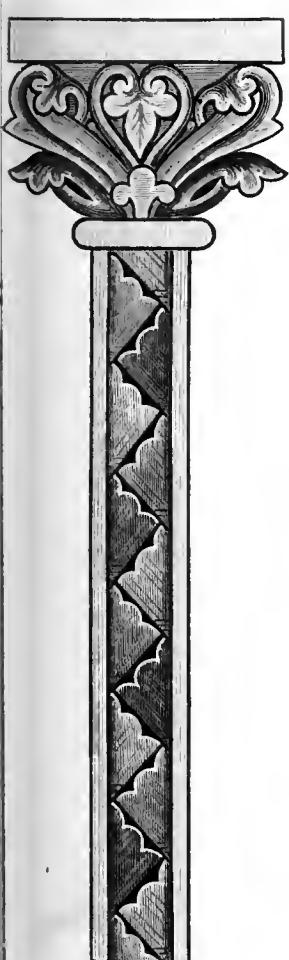
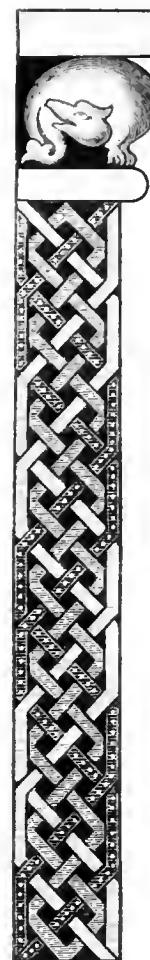
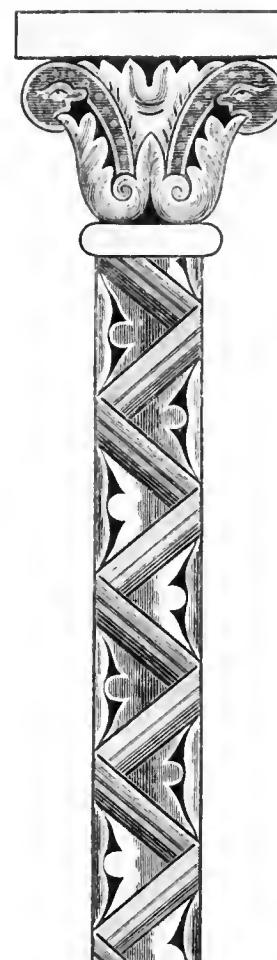
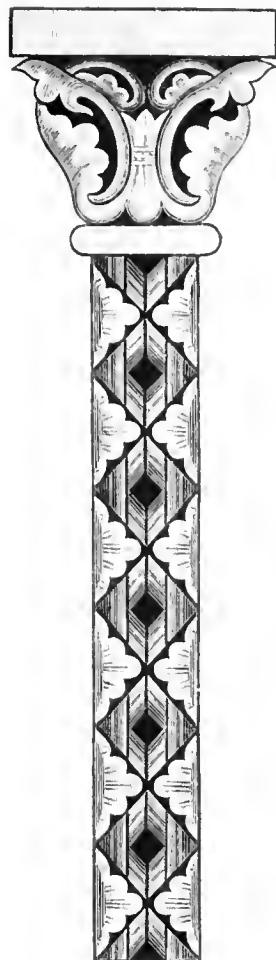
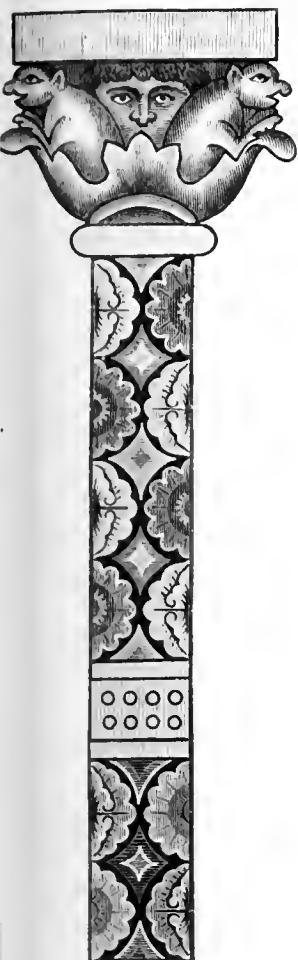
and written on vellum in double columns. The illuminated letters prefixed to each book are more richly coloured and more highly finished than are found in the former. Prefixed to the first is the Epistle of Jerome to Paulinus, with a full-length figure of the writer sitting at a desk, while a monk holds out an ink-horn to him. In the first book of Kings are also introduced interesting

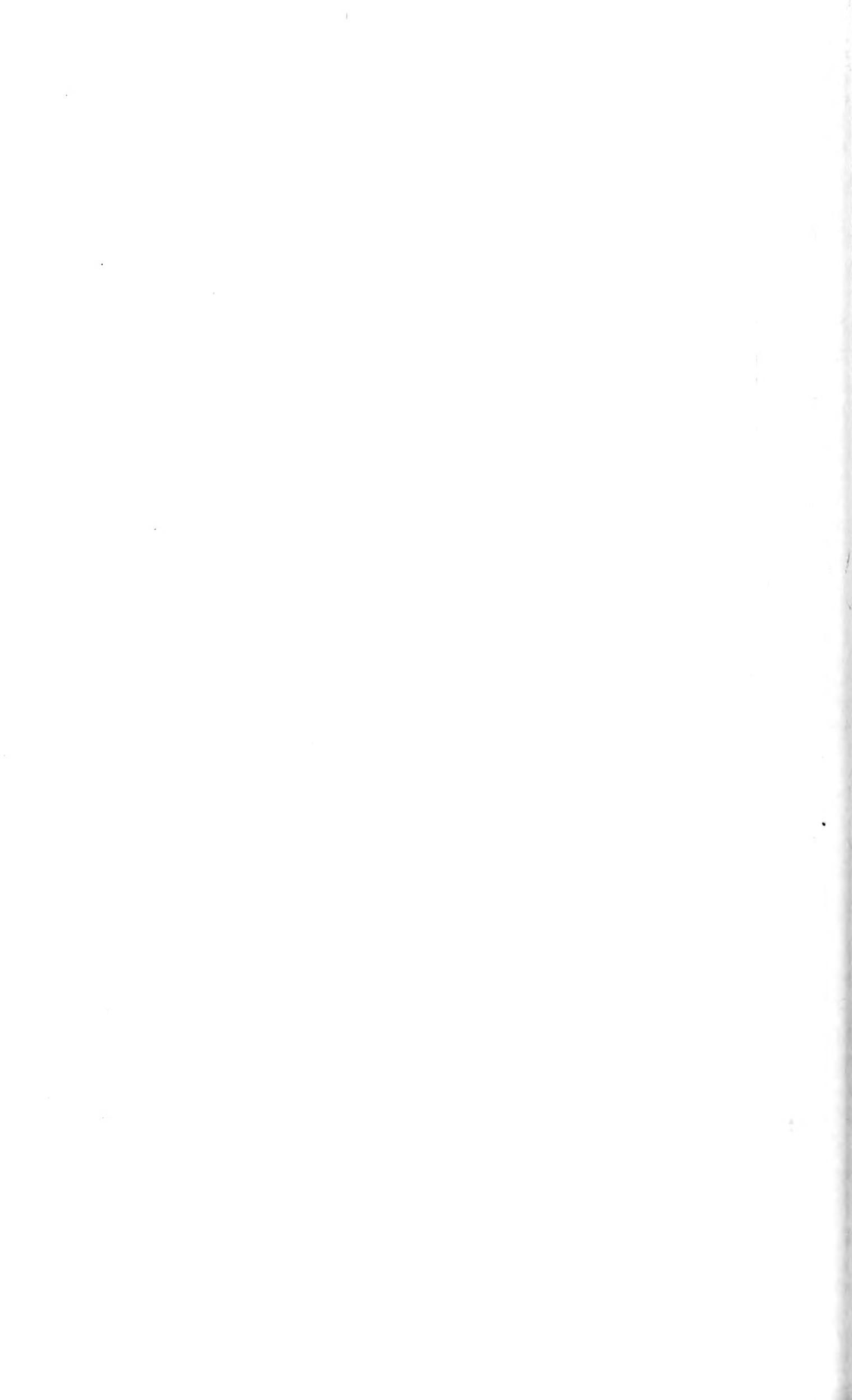


illustrations of costume in the figures of Goliath in chain mail, and of Saul destroying himself. The second volume commences with the *Psalter*, the initial letter of which is magnificently executed, and the New Testament is embellished with figures of the Apostles.







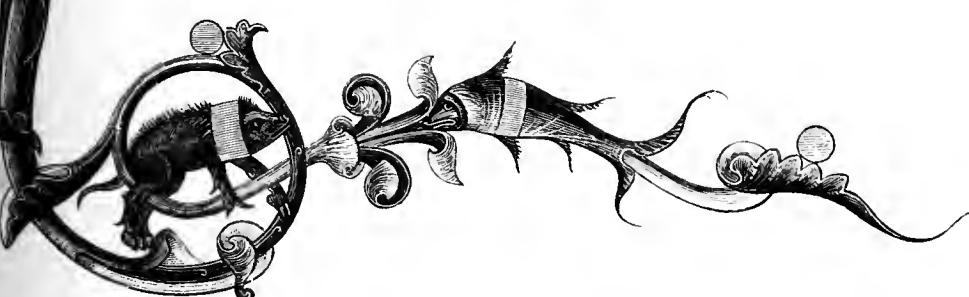






ROM the end of this century books became reduced in size, and their contents exhibited a similar diminution in all their decorative features. The principal capital letters were commonly enclosed within square frames, at the angles and along the sides of which were frequently placed medallions, the one half encroaching upon the border within, and the other on the plain margin without. These medallions contained figures of prophets, saints, minstrels playing on various instruments, or other illustrations of the text to follow. Between the outer ornamental border and the letter, the ground, of a dark colour, usually blue, was elaborately diapered. The letter itself was composed of the most delicate and intricate interlacing of small bands of light brown, green, and blue, alternately. These bands commenced with the heads of snakes or fanciful reptiles, from which small leaves occasionally projected, and terminated in full bunches of foliage. Entangled in these folds are found dogs, rabbits, squirrels, and other animals, most carefully drawn, and in every conceivable attitude. These, like the figures in the medallions, are on raised and burnished gold grounds. All these details are surrounded by a clear and intensely black outline, evidently composed of lamp-black and gum. This description is taken from the letter B which forms our next plate, copied from a Psalter in the possession of the Society of Antiquaries of London. It formerly belonged to Robert de Lindesey, who was Abbot of Peterborough, and a great benefactor to it, for seven years before his death, on October 25, 1222. It is in excellent preservation, and may be pronounced one of the finest examples of English art of the early part of the thirteenth century now in existence. The musical instruments shown in our example are the harp in the hands of King David; and in those of the minstrels, the fiddle in the hand of the one in the medallion on the left side of the letter; that in the

upper medallion on the right side is a viol, played upon the knee, and may be called a tenor-viol, from not



Our initial is a specimen of Italian art of the thirteenth century, from a copy of the New Testament in the Bodleian Library.

being proportionably large enough for a bass-viol; the instrument on the knee of the figure below it is a shalm; that in the panel in the centre of the lower margin was called “organistrum” (the ancient hurdy-gurdy); two persons are engaged upon it, the one turning a handle that communicates with an inner wheel, which ground against the strings, and the other stopping the string with the hand to regulate the note which the wheel sounded.

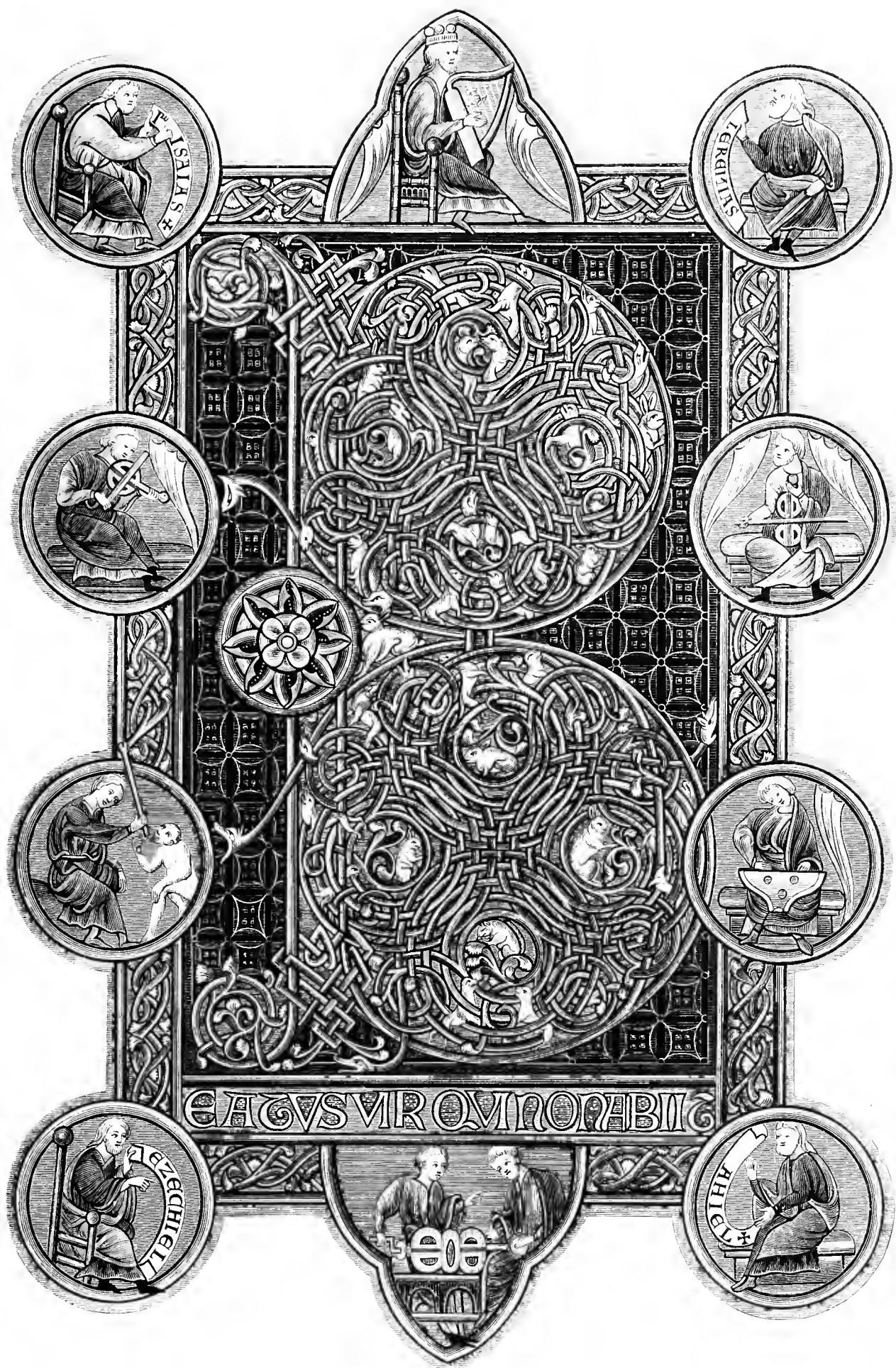
During the thirteenth century several important changes took place in the art of illumination. In the beginning of it, highly burnished gold, on raised grounds, came into general use as the backgrounds, both to figures and ornaments, in lieu of the more simple application of leaf gold, found in earlier works. At the same time, the delicate material called uterine vellum began to be employed; and on its exquisitely smooth and even surface the scribes produced writing frequently so minute, that to decipher it the aid of a glass becomes necessary. This writing was as remarkable for its beauty and accuracy as for its microscopic character. Another peculiarity in the small figures found in manuscripts in the latter part of this, and during the following century is, the marvellous fineness of the lines by which the features of the faces are shown; as these are without any gradation to indicate light and shade, and, as the faces are only slightly tinted, or left altogether free from colour, they mark a distinct style in art. These lines are frequently drawn with wonderful truth, beauty, and propriety of expression, while the hair is varied with stronger lines massed in flowing curls.

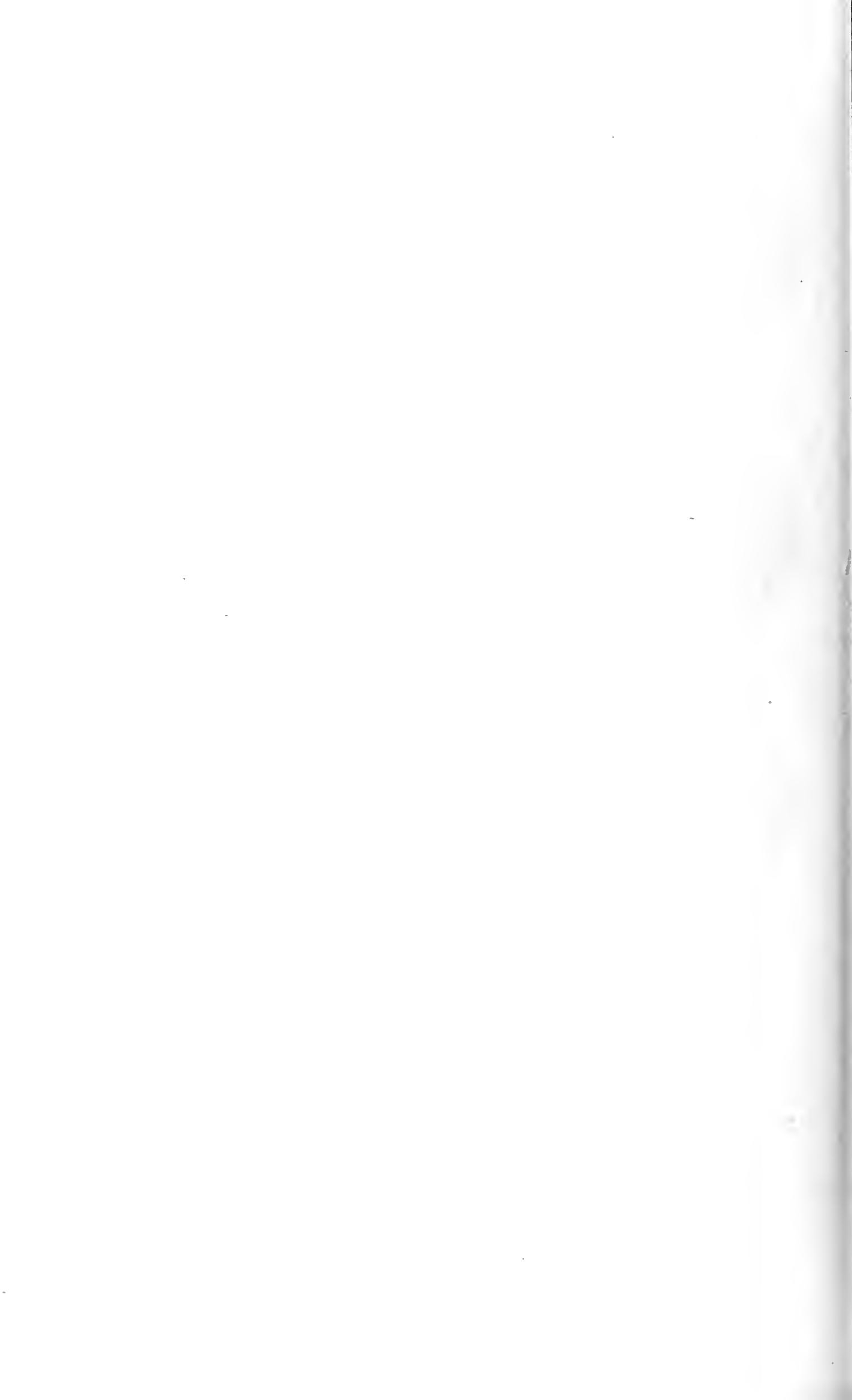
Our engraving on the following page is taken from the Apocalypse in a Bible in the Douce Collection of the Bodleian Library at Oxford, No. 180, of about the date of 1300. The subject is intended to illustrate the 26th chapter, 16th verse. On the open book in the hand of the seated figure is “Je Jhesu ai en voie mon angleterre inner as vos en les iglises, je suis Rei.” The other book has a part of the 18th verse. It contains ninety-seven drawings, some in outline, slightly tinted, the others covered with coarse and heavy colours, evidently by another hand, and at a later time.

For the general characteristics of the art of this period, we would place in the first rank a Psalter, now in the British Museum, but formerly in the library of Archbishop Tenison. This volume is of great historical interest, independent of its artistic merits. It was begun as a marriage present from King Edward I. and Queen Eleanor to their third son, Alphonso, who was betrothed to a daughter of Florent, Count of Holland, a marriage contract having been sealed at the Hague in August, 1284. The prince, however, unfortunately died on the 19th of that month, when it would appear that only the first eight leaves of this Psalter had been completed. It was afterwards finished by inferior hands, and passed a few years later into those of



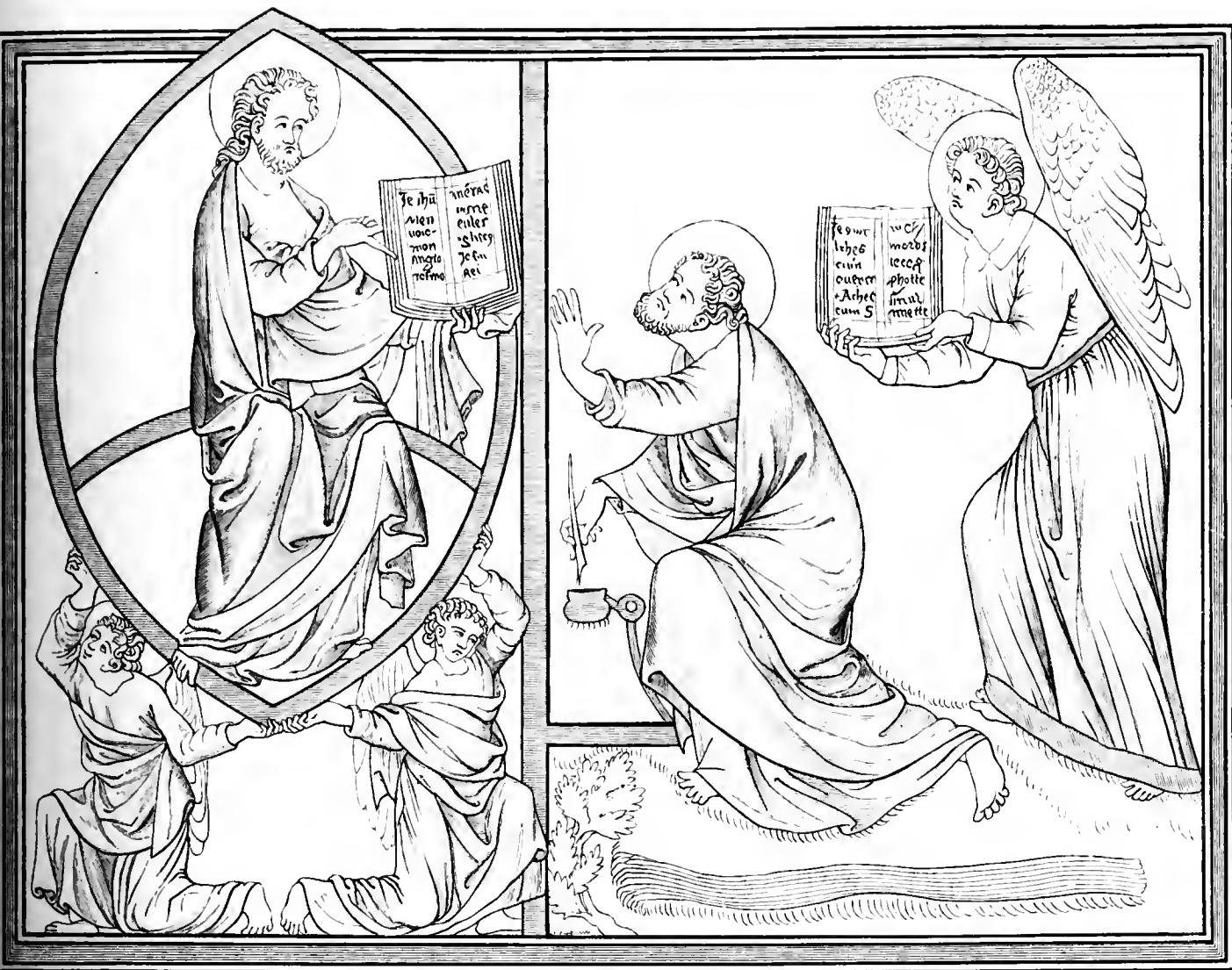












his sister Elizabeth, who married, firstly, John, Count of Holland, the brother of Alphonso's intended bride; and, secondly, Humphrey de Bohun, Earl of Hereford, and Constable of England.

There is strong evidence to prove that this volume was executed in the convent of the Blackfriars of London, which was founded by Edward I. and Queen Eleanor, and where the hearts of Prince Alphonso and his mother found burial. But, as the art of illuminating was then becoming a lay occupation, the scribe employed may have been a monk, and the painter a layman. Should that have been the case, the services of so skilful an artist must have been comparatively costly, and this may account for their having been dispensed with when the purpose for which they had been engaged could not be accomplished.

Of these sixteen pages the first, which we have had engraved, is by far the most richly illuminated. It is entirely enclosed in a border composed of lozenge-shaped panels filled with lions and cross-crosslets fitchée in gold on deep blue grounds; the border being broken in the centres and sides by roundels filled with elegant interlaced tracery, and cusped on the outside with six points, and further enriched with the figures of English birds,

painted from the life. At the top are varieties of finches, and on the right side a woodpecker and kingfisher. The initial at the head of the page contains a miniature of King David on his throne playing on the harp, on a raised gold ground diapered with a light yellow colour. On the lower margin are figures of David and Goliath, the latter shrinking into the corner, with the blood trickling down his face, while at the opposite end the former is seen holding the sling with which he has wounded the giant. Between the two are shields charged with the arms of Prince Alphonso and the Count of Holland, separated by a carefully-painted sea-gull, with a columbine, and another flowering shrub. These plants may symbolize the two countries of England and Holland, and the gull the sea which separates them.

The calendar prefixed to this, as usually to other Psalters, is filled with the names of saints, amongst which those of English origin are numerous; and this one is rendered peculiarly interesting from its containing notices of deaths of members of the Royal Family of England, from A.D. 1290 to A.D. 1316, and of other persons of the families of Mereworth and Hausted, evidently inserted at the times of such deaths. From these entries in the calendar, we are justified in concluding the book when completed came into the hands of a person closely connected with the Royal Family of England, and that within six years of Prince Alphonso's death; and there is every probability that it was presented to the prince's fourth surviving sister, Elizabeth, who was born in the year of prince Alphonso's death, 1284, as the arms of Humphrey de Bohun are painted on the ground of one of the miniatures at the beginning of the volume, and also by the cessation of the entries of royal obits after her death in 1316. The obits under the names of Hausted and Mereworth confirm this conclusion, for we find individuals of both families intimately connected with the princess's household.

As the first Psalm occupies entirely the first leaf, no opportunity is afforded for a border to the second page. The third has a corner border-line at the top and the bottom, on opposite sides. On the terminating volute of the upper border is a crane, grotesquely finished, standing on one leg, and having on its back a monkey, who presses a little red cap on the bird's head. A great deal of cleverness is shown in the drawing of the leg on which the crane stands, the muscular power being well displayed, and the joints and sinews of the stiffened leg well indicated. At the top of the lower border-line is the device of a lion struggling in the gripe of a dragon, and being mangled by its fangs.

On the continuation of the same border, and filling the interval between the corner of the page and the terminating volute, is a drawing of a stag with bent head, prepared to receive on its antlers a winged dragon, which

rushes hissing upon it with open jaws. A blackbird the while, with an air of interest, watches the contest from among the leaves of the volute. The stag is firmly drawn in outline; the body dappled over and shaded on the back, the softness of the coat being very successfully imitated. The antlers are tinted light blue. One of the front legs is straightened and stretches forwards, to give firmness to the position. The dragon is appropriately coloured.

The subject represented in the lower margin of the fourth page is a combat between a rustic, armed with sword and buckler, and a wild beast. The figure of the human combatant is excellently drawn, and much humour is displayed in the expression of the features, indicating not a little alarm, and at the same time a stubborn resolution to fight out his dangerous contest.

The lower border-line of the sixth page has a charming tinted drawing of a mermaid suckling her infant. The human portions of the figures are finely drawn in very delicate outline. The head of the mother is very beautiful, with a rich profusion of flowing hair confined by a golden chaplet. Her fishy extremity is covered with silvery scales, but now blackened by oxidation, and has an additional ornament in the figure of an ape standing on its hands with its feet in the air. The tail of the infant is gilt and its fins coloured red. The entire group, fantastic as it is, is extremely graceful, and striking also from its novelty; and the tenderness of action in the intertwining arms and the contracted hands of the figures are very artistic.

The subject at the bottom of page 7 is remarkably pretty. A huntress of slender form, and clothed in a long flowing dress of deep blue, holds in leashes three greyhounds, in front of which is a herd of fallow deer, represented by a buck, a doe, and a fawn, in full flight, a smaller dog pursuing them. The huntress leans backward to keep in the dogs, one of which strains at the game, another crouches with its head on its paws, and the third turns back its head to its mistress. In advance of the flying herd is an exquisite group of a doe suckling her fawn, which kneels on a turf mound sprinkled with daisies. The action of the dogs and deer is excellently conceived, and the modelling of the bodies and shading of the coats of the deer most admirable.

Page 8 has no border illumination or drawing in the lower margin. At the bottom of page 9 is a hawking scene. The falcon has struck down a wild duck, and is tearing open its back with its beak. The huntsman follows at full gallop, and stretches out his glove to reclaim the bird. The screaming duck and eager hawk are drawn with life-like effect. A vine, covered with leaves and bunches of grapes, grows out of the waving border-line on which the sketch is drawn.

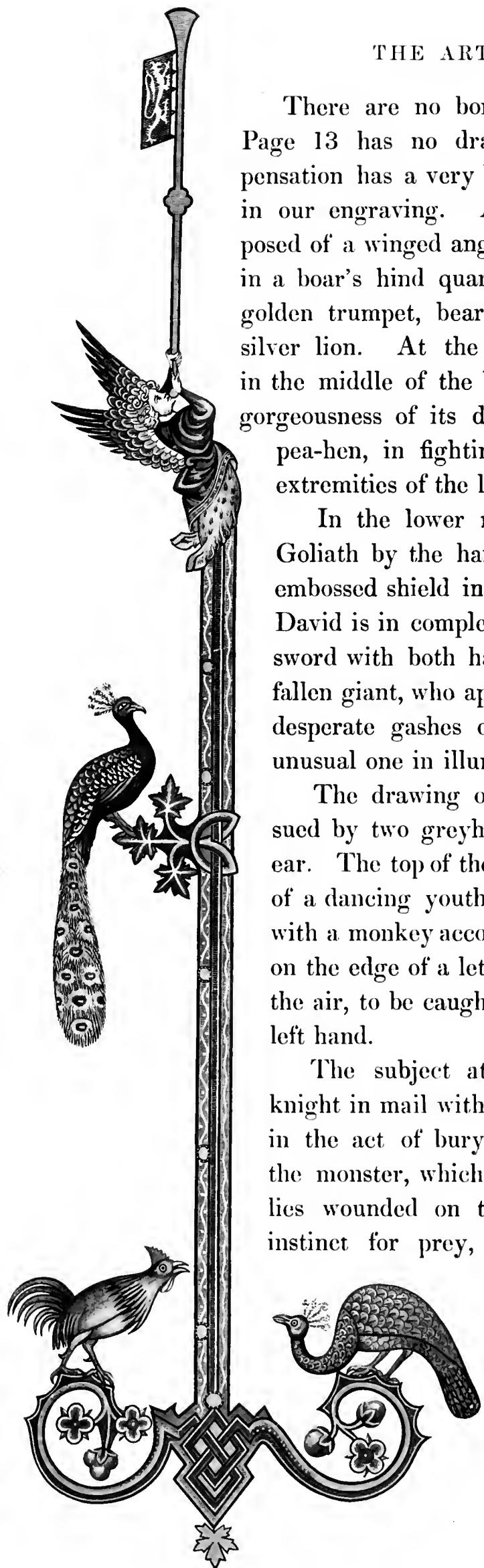
There are no border illuminations to pages 10, 11, and 12. Page 13 has no drawing on the lower margin, but in compensation has a very beautiful border on the inner margin, copied in our engraving. At the top of the line is a monster, composed of a winged angel in a robe of rich green, and terminating in a boar's hind quarters, coloured scarlet. The angel blows a golden trumpet, bearing a blue banner, on which is painted a silver lion. At the extremity of a leaf growing from a knot in the middle of the border stem, a peacock is painted in all the gorgeousness of its deep blue body and iris tail. A cock and a pea-hen, in fighting attitudes, are painted on the branching extremities of the line.

In the lower margin of page 14 is painted the death of Goliath by the hand of David. Goliath is on his knees, with embossed shield in his right hand, and broken spear in his left. David is in complete mail, with golden casque, and wielding a sword with both hands, lays open with it the bald head of the fallen giant, who appears to have been brought to the ground by desperate gashes on both his heels. The subject is not an unusual one in illuminated Psalters.

The drawing on page 15 is a stag in full flight, and pursued by two greyhounds, one of which hangs by the animal's ear. The top of the side margin has an extremely pretty subject of a dancing youth, dressed in green, and playing on the viol, with a monkey accompanying him on the bagpipes. Over them, on the edge of a letter, stands a monkey tossing gold plates into the air, to be caught on the point of a stick which it holds in its left hand.

The subject at the foot of page 16 is a combat of a knight in mail with a griffin. The knight, who is unhorsed, is in the act of burying the point of his lance in the chest of the monster, which clutches at him with its beak. The horse lies wounded on the ground; and a raven, guided by its instinct for prey, has already alighted on the saddle, and is about to gorge itself on the dying animal.

The subject of the drawing on page 17, and the last of the series, is a man, armed with sword and buckler, defending himself from the attack of a









**E**atus vir qui nō  
abut in consilio ini-  
piorum: et in via pec-  
atorum non steti-  
xii in cathedra pax leu-  
cie non sedet.

**S**ed in lege domini  
iuliantas eius: et in  
lege eius nūeditabit  
dīe ac uite.

**E**t erit tanquam lignum quod plantatum  
est semis decursus aquazum: quod fructum su-  
um dabit in tempore suo.

**E**t foliū eius non refluet et omnia que cūq;  
faciet <sup>temp</sup> prosperabuntur.

**N**on sic impi non sic: sed tanquam puluis  
quem proicit nescius a facie terre.

**I**deo non resurgent impi in iudicio neq; per-  
catores in consilio iustorum.

**Q**uoniam uouit dominus mām iustor: et i-  
uxer impiorum peribit.

**M**ultare fecerunt gentes et populi uie-  
disti sunt in aula.

**E**nterunt reges terre et principes conuenient





lion, who, with open jaws, crouches for the fatal spring. The border-line on this page commences with a dragon's head, and facing it is a green lizard, with tail stretched to the top of the page, very vividly coloured. All the designs on these eight leaves show an amazing vigour of invention combined with the truest taste for beauty, while every page is quite a composition of colour.\*

Of equal beauty with the preceding volume is a most exquisitely written Bible in the old Royal Collection of the British Museum, marked I D i, of the date of about 1270. It is written on the finest uterine vellum, in a minute, most regular, and delicate hand ; and with scarcely a distinguishable flaw from the beginning to the end. The ornamental work in the margins is peculiar in character and very fantastic, but always beautiful from the lustre and harmony of the colouring. A rich green, which characterizes the English school of the time, is much introduced. It has many miniatures, delicately outlined on diapered ground, more pure in expression, and graceful in form, than any others we have met with of the same date. This precious manuscript is English in its character, has always been in English hands, and has the final guarantee of its English origin, by the inscription at the end of the New Testament, of the name of the scribe, in these words :— “Will's Devoniensis scripsit istum librum.”

The next manuscript we would cite is in the Royal Collection of the British Museum, 2 B vii, commonly called Queen Mary's Psalter, from its having been presented to her by Baldwin Smith, a citizen of London, in 1553. It is written on 320 pages of the finest vellum, and cannot be placed earlier in date than the end of the thirteenth century. About this time a fashion came into vogue of decorating a manuscript by the introduction of coloured drawings in the lower margins, which was in particular favour with English miniaturists. The first portion of this volume consists of a series of outline drawings, slightly shaded with green, lilac, and brown, representing the history of the Old Testament from the Creation to the death of Solomon. Next follow drawings of the prophets and patriarchs, but the outlines have been filled up with body colour by an inferior hand. After this succeeds the Psalter, with the usual calendar prefixed, ornamented with ornaments, initials, and, occasionally, miniatures. The most curious feature, however, of this manuscript is the marginal drawings before alluded to, and which run nearly through the volume. They are arranged methodically in the following order. First, illustrations of natural history ; then, scenes of

\* This description is chiefly taken from a more elaborate one by Mr. E. A. Bond, of the Manuscript Department of the British Museum, published in the first number of “The Fine Arts Quarterly Journal.”

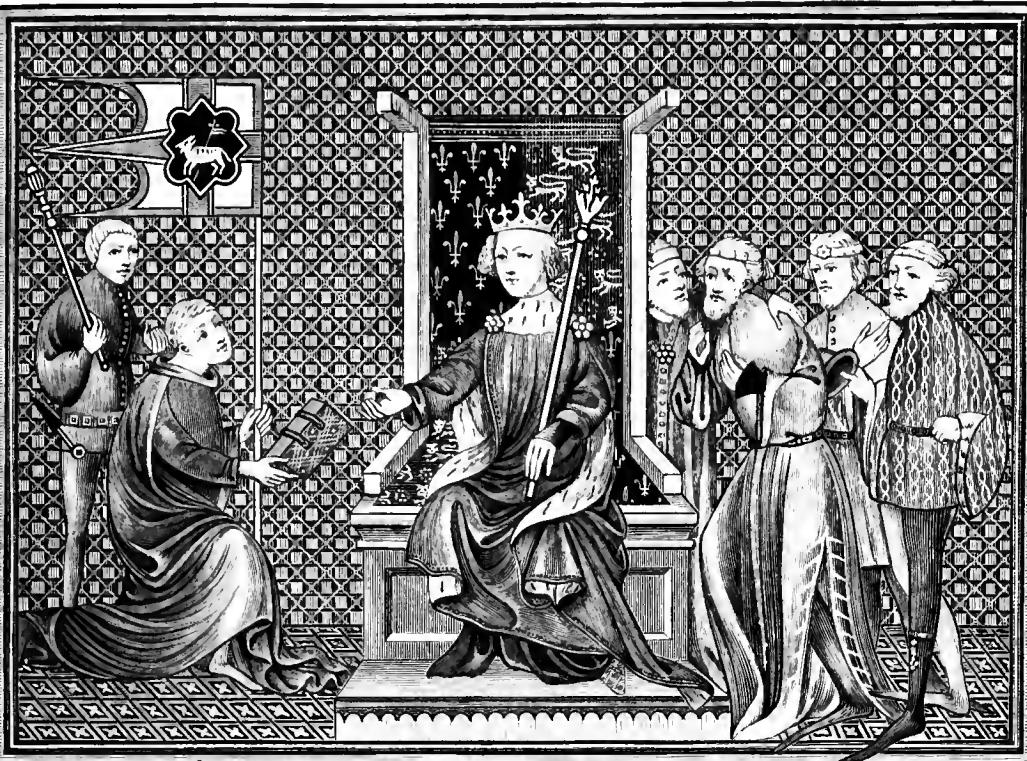
sports and hunting ; then, banqueting ; and, finally, lives of saints. These drawings exhibit great skill in the grouping, considerable elegance in the attitudes of the individual figures, and a vast amount of humour in many of the burlesques. It is proved to be an English work by the handwriting, the Litany, and entries of saints in the calendar, and by the colours employed on it. These fine works are sufficient to prove there was an English school of miniaturists in the latter part of the thirteenth century, equal, at least, in skill to that of any other country at the same time.

We must also notice a magnificent Psalter in the Arundel Collection, No. 83, of about that date, and possibly by the same hands as the preceding volumes. The first page is an admirable composition in the style of the Tenison book, and many of the following ones are surrounded by borders composed with equal taste and originality, though of a more simple treatment.

Our next plate is taken from a very interesting manuscript in the Royal Collection of the British Museum, marked 20 B vi. It is entitled, “*Epistre au Roy Richard II. d'Angleterre, par un Solitaire de Célestins de Paris.*” It contains many small illuminated letters and borders, but only two drawings occupying whole pages. In the first is shown the sacred monogram in burnished gold, within a panel, the field of which is powdered on one side with the badge of France, the fleur-de-lis, and on the other, with the lion of England. Above this panel are three smaller ones, the centre being occupied with the crown of thorns, from which proceed rays of glory over those of France and England, which fill those on each side of it. The whole is surrounded with a rich and elaborate border. On the opposite page appears the subject of our engraving. The monk on his left knee, with a banner in his left hand charged with the symbol of the lamb, is presenting with his right hand his book to King Richard, who is seated in his robes of state, crowned, and with his sceptre in his left hand. The three principal figures on the right of the king are supposed to be his uncles, the Dukes of Lancaster, York, and Gloucester. The hair of these noblemen is bound by jewelled circlets round the forehead. This group is an instance of the grotesque, whimsical, and extravagant style of dress which prevailed at this time. One of the figures has a long flowing dress, while that of another is cut short at the hip to show his parti-coloured pantaloons, one leg of which is white and the other grey. They all have shoes with the enormously long toes, called “crackowes,” so named, according to Mr. Planché, from the city of Cracow ; Poland and Bohemia having been incorporated by John, the grandfather of Richard's queen, and the fashion probably was imported from thence. They were compared to devil's claws by a contemporary writer,



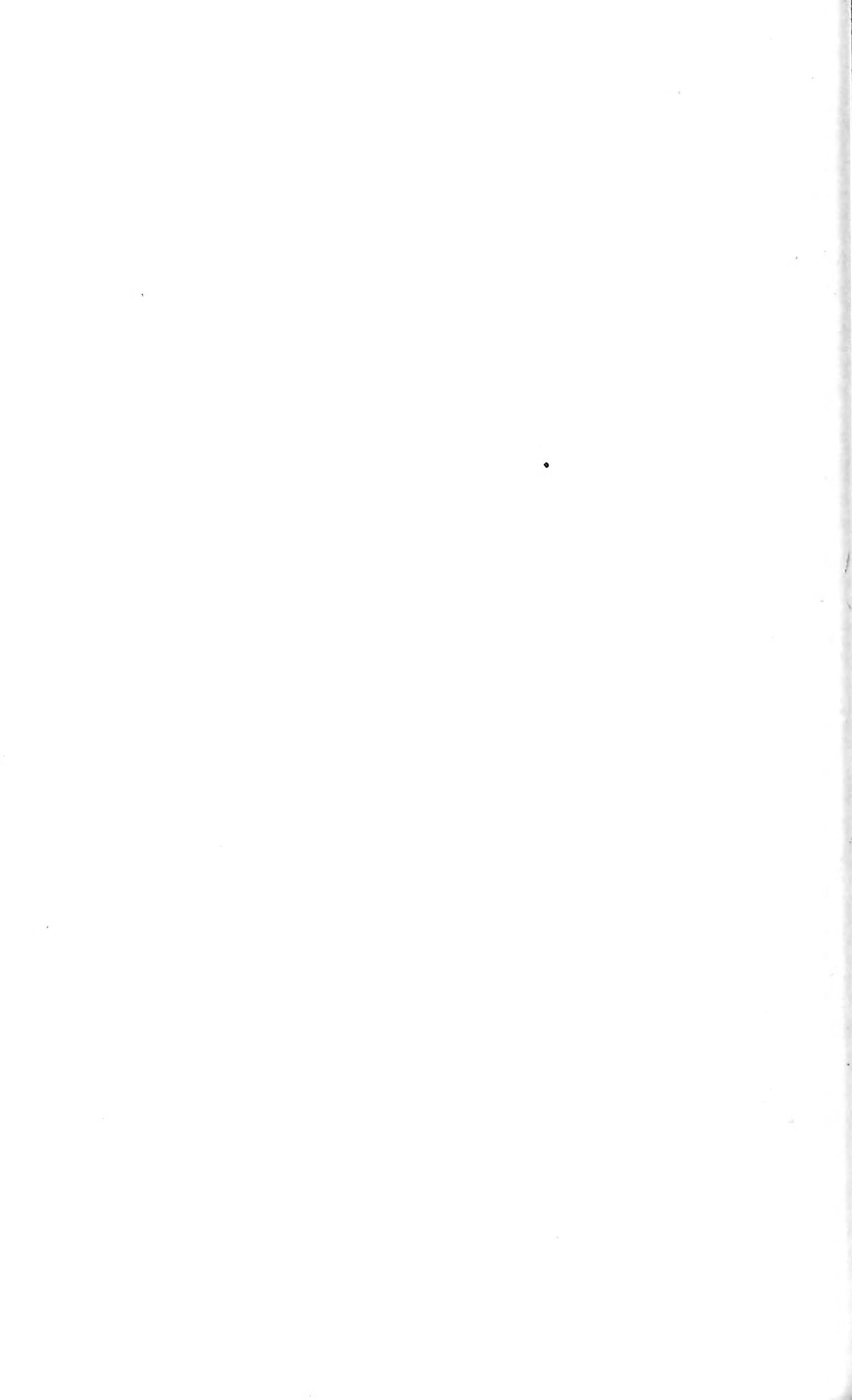




et simple  
epulice qui  
n'avoit fait  
re des celestins de paix a  
diellant atrs excellente  
troupe auant son rebours  
naine catholique et tres  
deuost pince Richaw<sup>r</sup>  
l'ameur de Dieu Roi  
gleterre. &c. pour auen  
ue couueracie des telec

frateruelle du dit Roi  
Angleterre et Charles p  
de frauce

comte a me uil  
comte tis a pleniffimo  
comte tuo. nif



who says that they were fastened to the knees with chains of gold and silver.

About this time the borders surrounding the leading pictures and the text, began to be altered in form, from being actual and symmetrical frames, to that established proportion of margin which still exists in the making up the pages of printed books ; that is, to make the outer margins and bottoms of the pages considerably wider than the space allowed to the inner margin and the top. The bottom was generally the widest ; and in volumes prepared for distinguished individuals, that space was commonly occupied on the first leaf with their arms, badges, and devices.

When the illuminators of this age had exhausted their inventive faculties by the making and mixing of monsters with every created being suited to their purpose, and caricature, frequently sadly destitute of refinement, reigned triumphant, even on the margins of sacred volumes, a new mode of decorating these margins came into fashion, and continued to prevail during the greater part of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. These borders were called ivy-leaf patterns, from conventional imitations of those simple and beautiful leaves forming a leading feature in these sparkling and lace-like designs.

The following engravings of portions of borders from various manuscripts, some in the British Museum, and others in the Bodleian Library, are sufficient to illustrate the general peculiarities of this mode of treatment. They are all on burnished gold grounds, and the details are of green, red, orange, and blue. In the third example the leaves are parti-coloured, orange on the one side and blue on the other. The roses and violets in the lower border are red and blue, and the leaves green and gold.

The most simple examples of this style of composition show the text enclosed on the sides and lower margin with a continuous stem, formed of red and blue, or either of these colours, with one of burnished gold. These were divided and bounded by strong black lines, the colours being made distinct by a fine thread of white passing along their centres. Sometimes from the extremities, and at others from the middle of these bands, proceeded a series of scrolls, interlacing each other in the most graceful manner, in single delicate lines of a dark brown colour. Along these lines were thrown out leaves, which in some instances were of burnished gold, in others of gold, blue, and red, alternately, while they were further enriched by little spiral tendrils appearing between them. The more open spaces were filled with studs of burnished gold, made star-like by fine lines radiating from the bold ones in which they were enclosed.

In more costly volumes the text was frequently confined within richly

coloured bands of filigree and leaves, or interlaced foliage, from which proceeded the outer scrolls, and occasionally the latter were of colour within two delicate black lines. These were often enriched with gaily plumaged birds. The details, however, of this style of decoration are so various, that we can only point out its leading features.

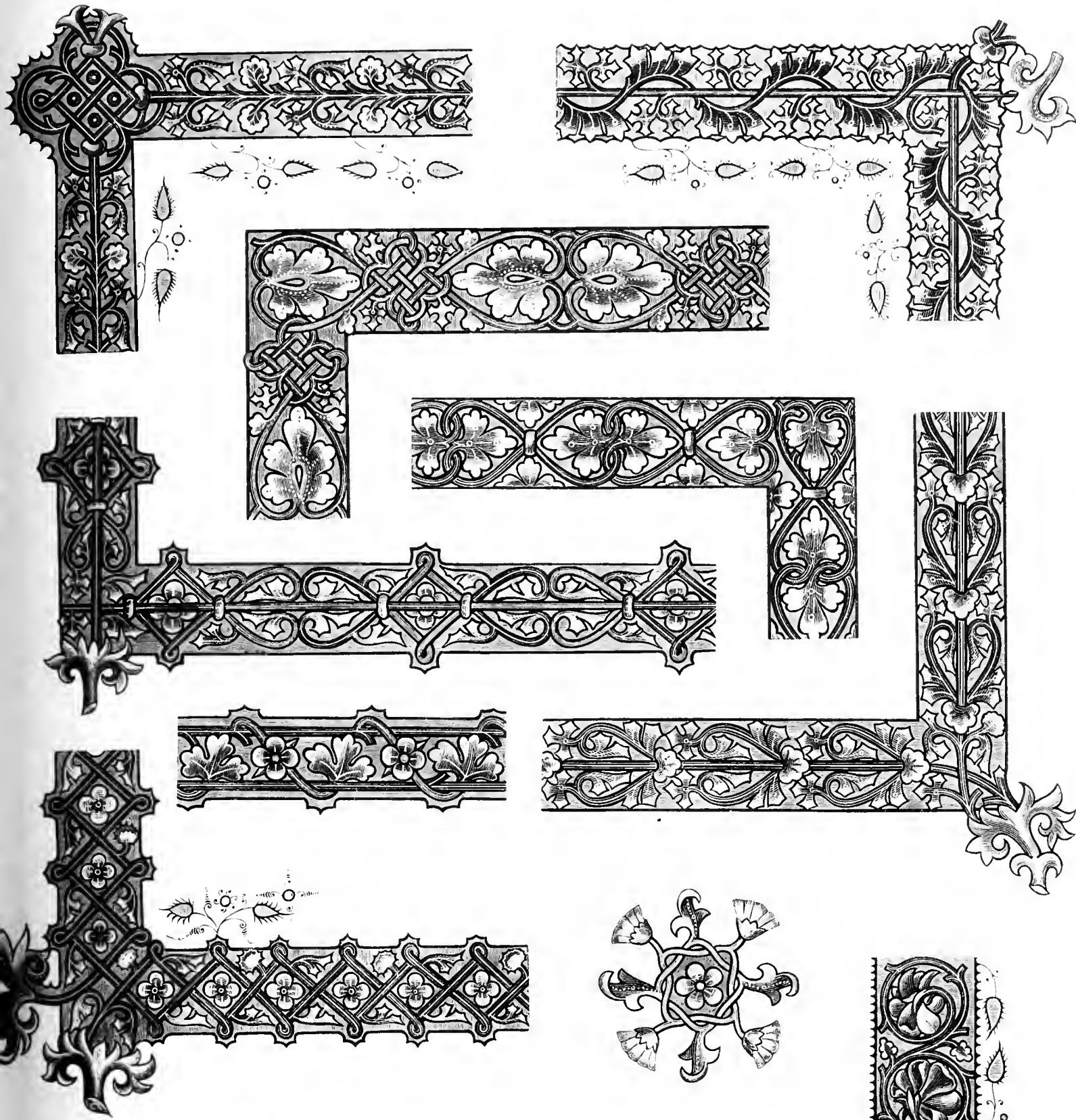
Manuscripts of the fourteenth century show a great advance in painting over previous works of a similar kind. Artists were no longer satisfied to leave their heads in little more than outline, and to copy each other in the same conventional method of composition and treatment. We now find in their works a considerable range of invention, and satisfactory evidence that the finest miniatures of the time were taken from living models, and finished with the greatest care. A certain amount of stiffness and want of variety in grouping still prevailed; and architectural embellishments, though admirable for the precision of their details, were still faulty with regard to perspective; and the very Chinese-like mode of representing rocks, trees, and other features of their landscapes, afford convincing proofs that no Clades or Turners had yet appeared to delight either the pious or the worldly-minded.

Towards the middle of this century, French art arrived at a very high, if not the very highest, position. In the Bibliothèque Nationale, the Musée d'Artillerie, and other libraries in Paris, many splendid examples remain to prove this great excellence. One of the finest is generally known as "The Great Hours of Jean, Duc de Berri," and one of the most interesting pages of this remarkable manuscript has been admirably reproduced in the "Palæographie Universelle, par M. Silvestre."

Exquisite illuminations of the latter half of this century may be found in the British Museum; the most perfect of which we consider to be a volume containing the Psalter, and other Offices, executed for Margaret of Bavaria, the wife of John, Duke of Burgundy, who was married in 1385, and died in 1419. It is a small folio, consisting of 453 leaves of fine uterine vellum, and had originally several pictures occupying whole pages, but only one now remains, an Ascension. The lower part of the body of the Saviour is alone seen, surrounded with clouds, his feet being supported by seven angels. The apostles with the two Marys are grouped on the left side of the picture, while the disciples are advancing from the portal of a building on the right. The towers of a castle rise from a mass of rocks over the heads of the disciples and apostles. The space between these rocks and buildings, and the clouds under the Saviour's feet is covered with an exceedingly minute diaper of squares, ruled in with black lines, and filled alternately with blue colour and burnished gold; the colour being made lively by







Vindrent assiegier Troyes. A ce siege :  
qui d'ye aus dura furent occis tous les  
fiz au roÿ priant marz que vn appelle





exceedingly fine and solid lines of white, and the gold to sparkle by each square being punctured with a fine point. This picture is enclosed within a remarkably elaborate ivy-leaf pattern, the gold leaves of which are also punctured to give them brilliancy, having bands of conventional clouds running along their centres, on which are supported angels playing musical instruments, and on the lower margin is a most delicately-painted sitting figure of the duchess, her hands resting on shields charged with the arms of herself and her husband. Besides the large drawing of the Ascension, there are sixty-one small ones incorporated in the text. These are by different hands, but all of great merit. Many of them are unsurpassed in beauty of design, or refinement, and delicacy of execution. We have considered this volume deserving of a somewhat detailed notice, as one of the most beautiful specimens now remaining of a style of art which prevailed very extensively, and for a long period.

From the early part of the fifteenth century the art of miniature painting began to decline in England, and the finest illuminated works now in this country from that time forward are by foreign painters, chiefly French and Flemish. One of the few exceptions is a volume of poems in the British Museum. It is a translation of the legends of St. Edmund and St. Fremund into English verse from the Latin. It was composed and written by order of William Curteys, abbot of the monastery of St. Edmundsbury, on the occasion of King Henry VI.'s visit to that monastery in the year 1433. It contains a very interesting and carefully-painted picture of the poet presenting his poem to the king, and little doubt can be entertained that they are truthful portraits. It is neatly and most delicately written, and contains no less than 125 miniatures, executed in a peculiar and effective manner, with numerous borders and initials of a graceful and original character.

Fine works of this late time are so numerous, both in public and private libraries, that we can only venture to particularize a few, and point out the decorative changes that had taken place, and the leading features of those changes in the countries where the art of illumination was in the most flourishing condition.

One of the best known works in the British Museum of the early part of the fifteenth century is the celebrated Bedford Missal. This volume was prepared for John, Duke of Bedford, son of Henry IV. of England, and Regent of France, and his wife Ann, daughter of John, Duke of Burgundy, married A. D. 1423. It contains most elaborate and delicately-finished miniatures of the duke and duchess, the former being highly interesting as the only known portrait of the duke. It was presented by the duchess, with

her husband's consent, to Henry VI. of England, on Christmas Eve, 1430. The following subjects occupy full pages. The Creation; the building of the Ark; the abatement of the Flood, with Noah sacrificing; and, the destruction of the Tower of Babel. Deep borders of filigree and flower pattern, in which appear medallions, filled with smaller miniatures, enclose all the other pages. The figure illustrations of this remarkable volume have been attributed to the three Van Eycks, without the slightest authority. They are evidently of French, and not of Flemish art; and, with the exception of the portraits, and a few of the lesser subjects, this manuscript is remarkable for the prodigious number, rather than for any unusual refinement, either of the ornamental portion of the borders, or the miniatures enclosed in them.

Of a much higher character of art is the little manuscript called the Prayer Book of Henry VI, also of French origin, in the Cotton Collection of the British Museum. It consists of 286 leaves, and is enriched with 14 highly-finished pictures, in six of which the infant king is represented on his knees in the act of devotion. In every instance he is crowned, and wears a surcoat, on which are embroidered the arms of England and France. From the apparent age of the king, there can be no doubt that this beautiful volume was executed about the time of his coronation, which took place in Paris in 1431, when he was in his tenth year. It may have been a present on that occasion from his uncle, the regent. The whole of the drawings in this volume are of great interest, particularly several elaborately finished interiors of churches. These, as well as the miniatures, are wonderful examples of skilful composition, and the most exquisite finish.\*

Of about the same date is a very interesting volume in the Harleian Collection, containing the Poems of Christine de Pisan, having some splendid coloured drawings, especially a very richly-furnished interior, in which the poetess is on her knees, presenting the book to Isabella of Bavaria, who is surrounded by her female attendants.

The folio manuscript, of a somewhat later time, called the Shrewsbury Book, is a noble volume full of instructive pictures and borders, though not of the high class of art we find in the Prayer Book of Henry VI.† It was made by the order of John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, "the warlike and martial Talbot" of Shakespeare, and was presented by him to the celebrated Margaret of Anjou, after her marriage with Henry VI. Its contents are chiefly romances of "chivalrie," which were then very popular. At the beginning of the volume is a superb miniature of Talbot, in the robes of the

\* Several of these drawings have been engraved for Dibdin's "Bibliographical Decameron."

† British Museum, Royal MS. 15 E vi.

Order of the Garter, presenting the book to Queen Margaret, who is seated beside the king, her husband. This picture of Talbot shows one of the few instances now remaining of the mantle being powdered, or covered with garters, instead of the more modern fashion of its displaying but one. Another of the numerous interesting pictures scattered through the book shows the king, attended by his court, delivering to Talbot his sword.

A series of the finest examples of French art of this time is contained in a volume now in the possession of Edwin H. Lawrence, Esq., of Abbey Farm Lodge, Hampstead, and formerly in that of the late Duke of Sussex. It is thus described in the late Mr. Pettigrew's catalogue of manuscripts and printed books in the Duke's library, published in 1827 :—

“ It contains 219 leaves, nine inches in height by six inches and a-half in width.

“ This book of offices is the most exquisite of all the illuminated works I have ever seen; each page is alike splendid; the borders superb in their ornament of most elaborate execution, and the paintings of the most beautiful description. The MS. commences with a calendar for the ecclesiastical year on twenty-four pages. To each month the sign of the zodiac, and some subject illustrative of the season, painted in gold and colours, are attached; the former at the side, and the latter at the bottom of the page. Some of these are exquisitely beautiful, not only from the brilliancy of the colours, but the correctness of the drawing and the interest of the subject: thus we have feasting, hawking, hay-making, reaping, threshing, wine-pressing, sowing, boar-hunting, &c. After the calendar are four portions of the Evangelists, followed by two prayers addressed to the Virgin. To each of the readings of the Gospels is affixed an illuminated miniature of the Evangelist engaged in writing his Gospel.

“ The first service in this MS. is the office of the Virgin: to the matins there is an illumination of the Annunciation; to the lauds, the Salutation; to the prime, the Nativity; to the tierce, the Nativity of Christ made known to the Shepherds; to the sext, the adoration of the Magi; to the nones, the Presentation in the Temple; to the vespers, the flight of Joseph, Mary, and the infant Saviour into Egypt; and to the completorium, or compline, the Virgin Mary, attended by angels, kneeling before the Deity, and receiving a crown of glory.

“ The next portion of the MS. consists of the seven penitential Psalms, and the litany of the saints, to which part there is an illumination of King David worshipping the Deity, who is figured in the heavens, surrounded by glory, and attended by angels.

“ The next part of the MS. is the office of the Holy Cross. An illumi-

nation of the Crucifixion is attached to this portion, which is succeeded by the office of the Holy Spirit; to which an illumination representing the descent of the Holy Ghost is affixed. This is followed by the office for the dead, to which a singular and highly-finished illumination is attached. This is followed by one in which the whole service of the burial is fully and ably represented. It shows the entombment of the body, the office of the church being performed by the priests, the attendant mourners, &c, being in the foreground. In the back and upper part is seen a struggle for the spirit between the good and evil powers, and the interposition of the archangel Michael, to overcome the efforts of the devil.

“ The next division of the MS. consists of the fifteen joys of our Lady. This service, to which a beautiful illumination of the Virgin and Child, attended by angels, is attached, is in the French language, and commences thus :—‘ Cy commeneent les quinze joies de notre dame. Douce dame de misericorde mere de pitie fontaine de tous biens qui portastes nostre seigneur iesu erist neuf moijs en vos precieux flans et lalait astez de vos doulces mamelles. Belle tres douce dame je vous cry mercy et vous pri que vous vueilliez prier vostre benoit filz qui ait pitie et mercy de moy. Et ainsi vous le priez belle tres douce dame et je magenoilleray quinze fois devant vostre benoit ymage en lonneur des quinze joies que vous eustez de votre chier filz en terre.’\*

“ This service is succeeded by that of the five wounds of Christ, also in the French language, to which an illumination of the Entombment is attached.

“ The last part is the service of the Holy Trinity. An illumination of the Trinity is prefixed to this portion, throughout which the saints, with their appropriate emblems, are painted in the margin.

“ Every capital in this MS. is splendidly illuminated in gold and colours. The MS. is written in a large Gothic character, and each page is furnished with borders three inches in breadth, of leaves executed in gold. To the pages just enumerated, on which there are paintings, there is, in addition to the grand border, an inner one in colours, formed of flowers, fruit, leaves, birds, angels, &c. Where the MS. does not extend to the extreme of the line, the space is filled up with an illumination in gold and colours; so minute has the attention of the illuminator been to adorn and beautify this exquisite MS.”

We cannot close our short notice of French illuminations of the fifteenth century without alluding to a superb manuscript, also in the British Museum, of the exceedingly popular “ Romance of the Rose.” The story opens with a large picture, in which a lover, falling asleep in the “merry

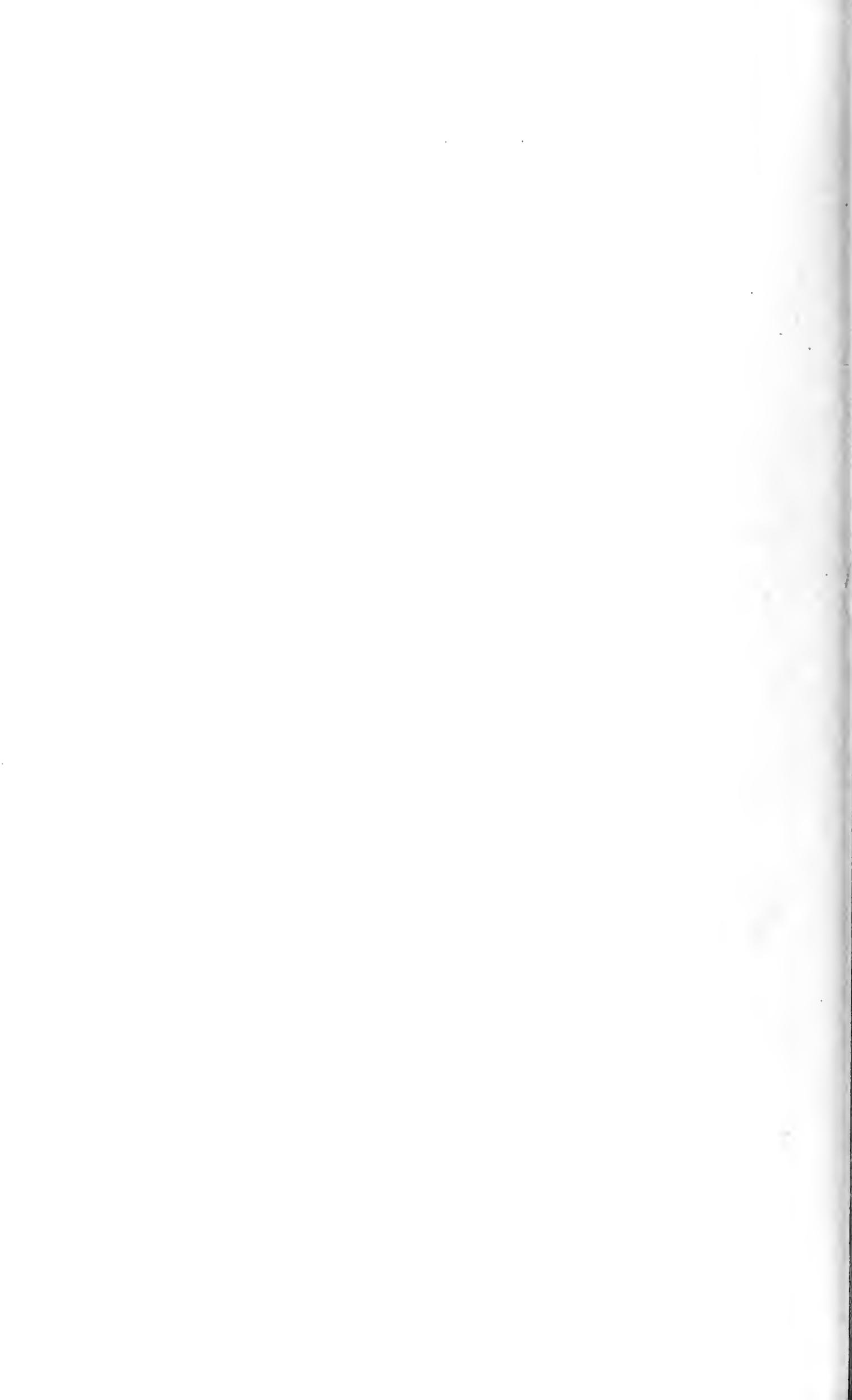
\* Our engraving has been taken from this picture.







ouïce dame de mi  
sericordie mere de pi  
etie fontaine de touz  
biens qui portastes nostre feig





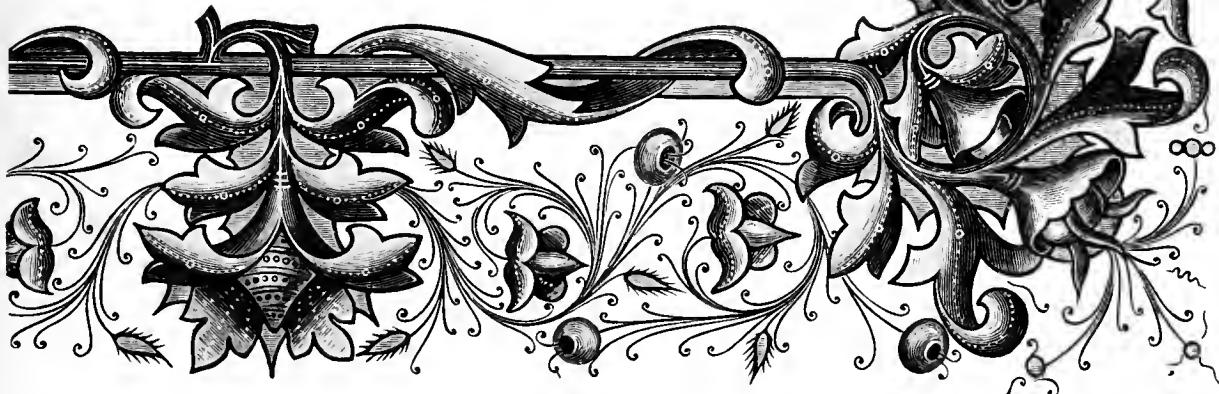


month of May," dreams that he arises early and quits the town for the country. At length he arrives at a fair garden, enclosed by a high wall, on the exterior of which are painted, in compartments, the principal passions and troubles of life; Hate, Covetousness, Sorrow, Envy, and Avarice, followed by Old Age and Poverty.\* It would be impossible to point out any miniatures more beautifully painted, or more full of character, than these. The rest of the story is abundantly illustrated with pictures of a very high class, most carefully finished, but none showing the genius evident in these single figures. They would have delighted Wilkie, had he been acquainted with them.

At this time a very bold and elegant style of ornamentation was employed on the margins of manuscripts, in which the foliage surrounding them was made to grow out of the body of the capital letter commencing the text, or at the beginning of a chapter in any part of the page. Decorations of this character are found in great perfection in English books. Our letter R, forming the next plate, and the portion of a border on this page, are favourable examples of its peculiarities. The letter and text are taken from a large folio Bible in the British Museum,† measuring twenty-four inches in height by fourteen inches in width. It is most profusely enriched with illuminations. The commencement of each book has a marginal border, surrounding and dividing the text into columns, and containing a large initial, sometimes composed of foliage in the character of our engraving, but more generally enclosing miniature pictures of the leading events described in them. The beginning of each chapter has a small initial equally elaborate, with

\* Old Age and Poverty have been carefully copied in Shaw's "Dresses and Decorations of the Middle Ages."

† Royal MS. I E ix.



branches and scrolls extending into the margins above and below, and enriching the spaces between them. The foliage is coloured of a light brown, red, and blue; green being altogether absent in the decorations, and but sparingly used in the miniatures. The ornament is enlivened by the most delicate lines, rings, and dots of white, and the burnished gold grounds by dots punctured on the surface.

It may be remarked that, by the end of the fifteenth century, almost every kind of document, when formally written, may be found either illuminated, or illustrated by drawings with the pen. Charters, wills, indentures, patents of nobility, armorial ensigns, statutes of foundation, books of accounts, and even those registers called mortuary, or obituary rolls, were thus decorated.

No school of the art of illumination during the whole of the fifteenth and the first half of the sixteenth centuries produced a greater number of works of extraordinary excellence than the Flemish. Nearly all the great artists of that time exercised their skill as miniaturists, as well as in the production of pictures on a larger scale. Hence we have manuscripts enriched with the pencils of the Van Eycks, of Memling, of Lucan van Leyden, of Mabuse, and of others nearly equal to these great men in reputation, which display all the artistic skill and careful elaboration of their more important productions.

It has been remarked that the tempera pictures of Fra Angelico, and other celebrated early Italian masters, were little more than enlarged illuminations. If so, on the other hand, these miniatures may be taken as reduced pictures. They exhibit the same careful composition, the same variety of character and expression, the same skilful manipulation of details, and the same evidence that, in their landscapes, as well as their architectural accessories, they were no longer governed by conventional models, but referred to nature, to make everything truthful.

The most splendid examples of the skill of these great Flemish painters are to be found in the celebrated Grimani Breviary, now in the library of St. Mark's, at Venice. It is a quarto volume, bound in crimson velvet, having an elaborately-chased border in gold on the sides, enclosing a bust of the cardinal, within an enriched medallion of the same precious metal. It contains 110 drawings, measuring nine and a-quarter inches in height, and seven inches in width, a very large proportion of which are by Memling.

The whole of these pictures have been recently published at Venice, in the shape of a series of very carefully-executed photographs, by Antonio Perini, with descriptions by Francesco Zanoto. Although these photographs give the character of the heads, and the general composition of the designs in





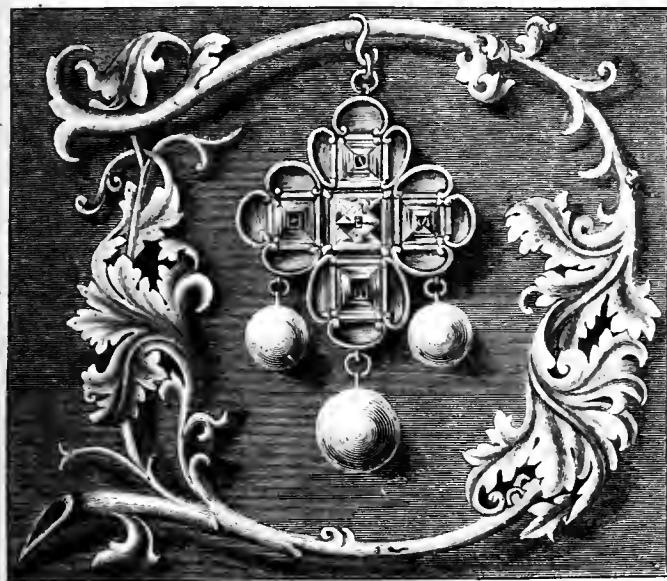
h̄is taliter alterantibus apl̄s se mediū. n̄ posuit oēs  
illorum quæstiones destruens. et quasi bonus conciona-  
tor extensa manu illos alloquens: omnes ad vñā con-  
cordiam adduxit ostendens nullum contraria sūus meritis  
esse salutatum: ambos nec populos et scientes et gra-  
ter delsquissē. n̄ deos qd̄ p̄ preuancarō nem̄ leḡis dēm̄ i  
honorauem̄: gentes uero quod ann̄ cognitū de oratura  
creatorem̄ n̄ dēm̄ debuerūt uenerau. gloriā eius i ma-  
ni facta n̄ uita uerūt sum̄ laudis. Utq; mā sum̄ lit-  
nēiam conseruatos: equales esse nerissima rāione dēm̄  
frat̄: p̄ esatūn cūm in cādem lege p̄ dīctūm et n̄ ados et  
gentes ad xp̄i fidem uocandoſ ostendat. Quam obrem̄  
viassūn eos humilians: ad pacem et concordiam cohō-  
tatur. Expliati argūmentū. Anapit alind argūmentū

Omam̄ sunt partes  
y talie quos non qui-  
libet duodecim dispu-  
lorum p̄imū iſtcorit  
sed quidam uideorūm  
credenūm qui ab iero-  
solimis romam nemē-  
tes ubi princeps orbis  
residebat. cni erant ip̄i  
subiecti fidem quam a-  
pud ierosolimam didi-  
cerant: romanis emā

gelizanerunt. Postea neco preuenti sunt a fallis apl̄s:  
et sub nomine dñi m̄i ih̄u xp̄i in lege eti p̄hetis erant m̄-  
duati. Nos reuocat apostolus ad neram et emangelicu-  
līdem scribeus eis ep̄istolam a corintho tūtate metropoli-  
achaie regionis ḡaonum.



a satisfactory manner, they fail to convey any clear idea of the brilliancy and beauty of the colours employed, especially in the exquisite and varied borders surrounding them, in most of which gold is made a leading feature. To compensate in some measure for this defect, the two first drawings in the volume have been most admirably fac-similed. They commence the illustrations of the seasons. On the one page is the calendar for January, showing, on the lower margin, a gang of poor men drawing, by the aid of a long rope, a heavy load over the snow. The opposite drawing displays the richly-furnished interior of a wealthy family, who are feasting around a table laden with the luxuries of that inclement season, which a number of well-dressed attendants are busy in replenishing. Nothing can be more admirable than the execution of these most characteristic contrasts.



URING this time a peculiar feature in Flemish decorations was the introduction in their borders of flowing branches of trees, from which proceed masses of conventional foliage, in most graceful curves, the ends occasionally folding over each other, and the whole distributed into leaves, with the most intricate subdivisions. Growing out of these branches, and filling the spaces between them,

were the richest flowers and fruits, the gayest birds and insects, with every kind of being the fancy of the painter could suggest. In choice manuscripts these were copied with the utmost delicacy and truth, and, being relieved by projected shadows, showing all the gradations reflected from the bright tints around them, they appear almost deceptive enough to pass for miniature realities, rather than painted imitations of nature.

These borders were enclosed in moulded frames of the same colour as the branches, and relieved in the same manner. The ground within was sometimes of gold, and occasionally of silver, but more generally of colour; and, for the sake of variety, we frequently find in the same volume, not only the primitives, but every kind of compound tints employed.

Our initial letter is a good example of the ingenious manner the conventional branches above referred to were twisted into the forms of letters. They sometimes enclosed fruit, sometimes flowers, sometimes birds, some-

times insects, and occasionally, jewels, as in this engraving, on grounds in harmony with those of the borders of the pages on which they appear.

For skilfully-composed and carefully-executed borders in this style of art, we know of no better examples than the large ones surrounding some of the pages of the "Romance of the Rose," before referred to, which are evidently by a Flemish artist, though the miniatures belong to the French school. But, for abundance of specimens, showing every variety of treatment usually employed in the finest decorations of the latter part of the fifteenth century, few volumes are so remarkable as the copy of the "Hours of the Virgin," which formerly belonged to Isabella of Castile, the wife of Ferdinand II. of Spain. The miniatures throughout the volume, the displays of heraldry, and all its various details, are so admirable, that it is evident the first artists of the time must have been employed in its production. This superb volume is written on the finest uterine vellum, in a Spanish hand of the end of the fifteenth century. It is richly illuminated throughout, and ornamented with occasional borders of various designs, chiefly of scrolls and flowers, sometimes on a gold, and sometimes on coloured grounds, enclosing numerous miniatures of the finest Flemish art. From the arms of Don Franciseo de Boias, the second son of Don Alonso de Escobar y Cazeres and his wife, D. Mariana de Boias, appearing at folio 437, it would appear to have been executed for that person. He was employed by Ferdinand and Isabella as their ambassador to the Court of the Emperor Maximilian I, to negotiate the double marriage of the archduchess with the Infante Don Juan, and the Infanta Donna Juana with the Archduke Philip, governor of the Netherlands. He accompanied the archduchess in her journey from the Imperial court into Spain, where her marriage took place in April, 1497. There can be little doubt, therefore, that it was on the occasion of the celebration of this marriage that De Boias presented this volume to Queen Isabella.

The first of the following plates, which are taken from this volume, is an example of the character of the borders by which the text is surrounded and divided into columns throughout. The second is from an exquisitely finished miniature of St. Barbara. The border to this drawing is of silver with green bands crossing it. The border to that on the previous leaf is of blue and gold. They have evidently been copied from tapestries or hangings. The following account of this saint is taken from Mrs. Jameson's "Sacred and Legendary Art":—

"The legend of St. Barbara was introduced from the East, about the same time with that of St. Catherine. She is the armed Pallas or Bellona of the antique mythology, reproduced under the aspect of a Christian martyr.

"There was a certain man named Dioscorus, who dwelt in Heliopolis,

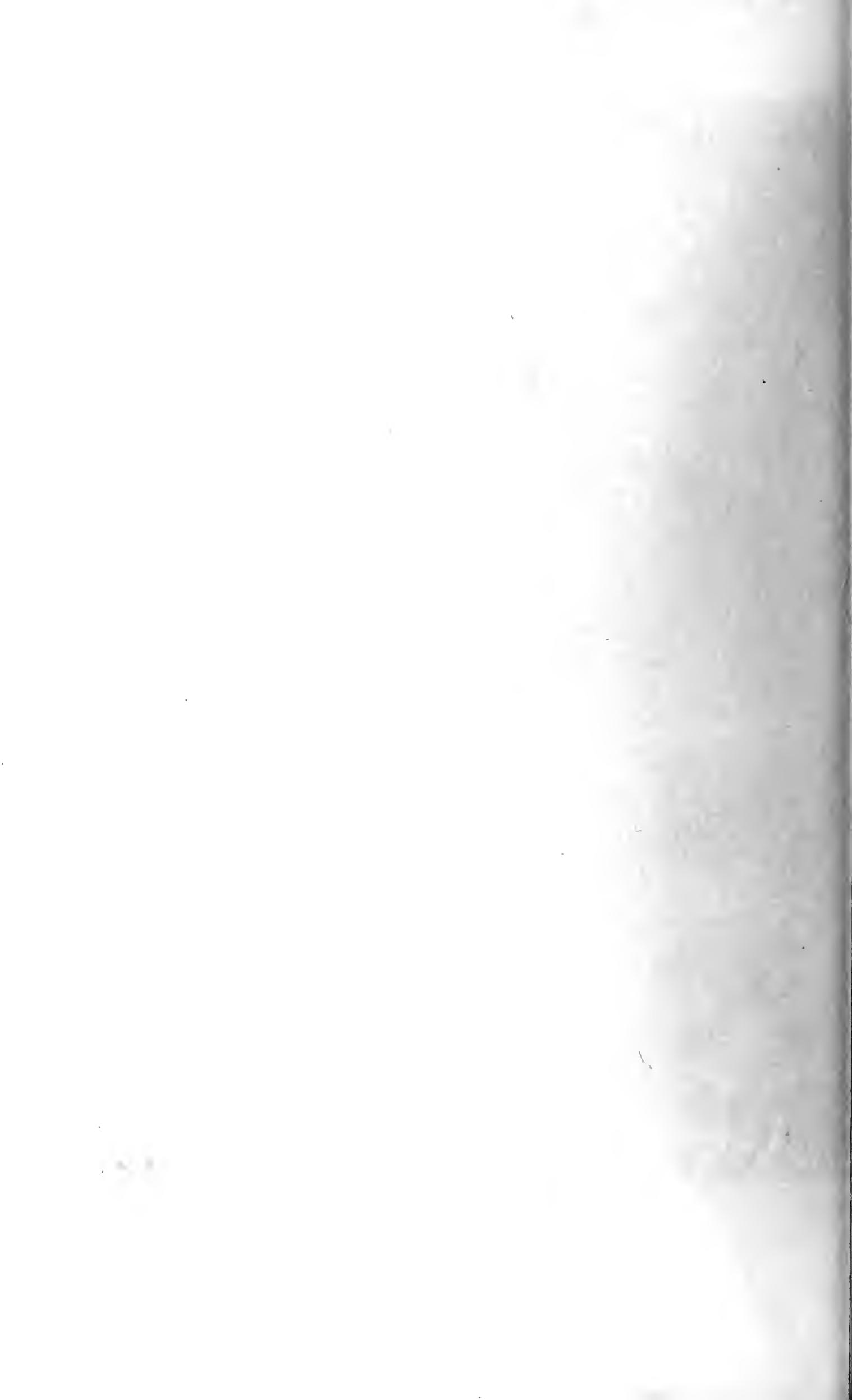


neute dūo tenelant ecog  
no cūser: duob) Fibiniū  
nente obitum ciamcū  
ulli at psalmū eripes wce  
mea addūm clamamis  
cilioz cimeze ad suipetiti  
ouē cō sp̄l̄ presetibō rab  
seutibis fibibis offesa s  
remisir Sicqz aia illa sci  
sua carneresō lunturq'  
mūs eribis celecere  
ta penetrantem asperit  
sim em enūzam: 7 qua  
ūsōlis non nūdicam  
claratatem būtem:



ve ato marco confessore  
tuo at q; potificis suppli  
casio nesrias placatus  
inten de perdo Exconca  
rio romauo Zeo prima  
Arcis natice  
romauis se'  
dit annos dñ  
os menses ceto dies x hic  
constituit ut ep̄is hosti  
eūis qm consecrat ep̄os  
Vrbis pallio vtezetur. et  
ab eodem ep̄i vzbis con  
secrarentur fecit etiam  
constitutum te oīm ec  
clesiastico ordine Znic  
fecit duas basīlicas: vna  
via ardeatma nūue quies  
cit 7 aliam in tra vzbem  
vnius zeo sedā  
suggestione  
comitantim  
obtulit basīlicē via arde  
atma tūudim rosarim  
quem constituit cuiste  
rimū 7 basīlicē qz mū  
geo obtulit patēa argen  
team penitentem libras  
triquinta 7 unas argenti  
duas pensantes libras  
xx. cip huii argenteum  
vnuu pensante libras  
drcem 7 calices ministrer  
ales argenteos pensantes







jufrlo sancte barbareb  
gus e martyris. O.  
raudinos de  
us salutais  
ur ut sicut.  
de beate ba:  
bare. uirg is  
tua luctus festinat  
gandeius: ita p[re]dono  
tus erudiamus asseu

Per diuin Lectio prim.  
barbara ueroni  
comedie ortasi  
lia dioscornob  
lis sed pagam propterni  
mam pulchritudinem  
a pie suo in tuis foris et  
emmenti collocatur. Ibide  
autem turmas fieri consti  
tunt utibi barbara se lau



noble, and of great possessions; and he had an only daughter, named Barbara, whom he loved exceedingly. Fearful lest, from her singular beauty, she should be demanded in marriage and taken from him, he shut her up in a very high tower, and kept her secluded from the eyes of men. The virtuous Barbara, in her solitude, gave herself up to study and meditation; from the summit of her tower she contemplated the stars of heaven and their courses; and the result of her reflections was, that the idols of wood and stone worshipped by her parents could not be really gods,—could not have created the wonders on which she meditated night and day. So she contemned in her heart these false gods, but as yet she knew not the true faith.

“ Now, in the loneliness of her tower, the fame reached her of a certain sage who had demonstrated the vanity of idolatry, and who taught a new and holy religion. This was no other than the famous doctor and teacher, Origen, who dwelt in the city of Alexandria. St. Barbara longed beyond measure to know more of his teaching. She therefore wrote to him secretly, and sent her letter by a sure messenger, who, on arriving at Alexandria, found him in the house of the Empress Mammea, occupied in expounding the Gospel. Origen, on reading the letter of St. Barbara, rejoiced greatly; he wrote to her with his own hand, and sent to her one of his disciples, disguised as a physician, who perfected her conversion, and she received baptism from his hands.

“ Her father, Dioscorus, who was violently opposed to the Christians, was at this time absent, but previous to his departure he sent skilful architects to construct within the tower a bath chamber of wonderful splendour. One day St. Barbara descended from her turret to view the progress of the workmen; and seeing that they had constructed two windows, commanded them to insert a third. They hesitated to obey her, saying, ‘ We are afraid to depart from the orders we have received.’ But she answered, ‘ Do as I command ye: ye shall be held guiltless!’ When her father returned he was displeased; and said to his daughter, ‘ Why hast thou done this thing, and inserted three windows instead of two?’ And she answered, ‘ Know, my father, that through three windows doth the soul receive light,—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and the Three are One!’ Then her father, being enraged, drew his sword to kill her, and she fled from him to the summit of the tower, and he pursued her; but by angels she was wrapt from his view, and carried to a distance. A shepherd betrayed her by pointing silently to the place of her concealment; and her father dragged her hence by the hair, and beat her and shut her up in a dungeon;—all the love he formerly felt for his daughter being changed into unrelenting fury and indignation when he found she was a Christian.

He denounced her to the pro-consul Marcian, who was a cruel persecutor of the Christians. The pro-consul, after vainly endeavouring to persuade her to sacrifice to the false gods, ordered her to be scourged and tortured horribly; but St. Barbara only prayed for courage to endure what was inflicted, rejoicing to suffer for Christ's sake. Her father, seeing no hope of her yielding, carried her to a certain mountain near the city, drew his sword, and cut off her head with his own hands; but as he descended the mountain, there came on a most fearful tempest, with thunder and lightning, and fire fell upon this cruel father and consumed him utterly, so that not a vestige of him remained."

As it is our chief object in this little treatise to refer to the best specimens of decorative art as shown in illuminated drawings, and to explain the changes and peculiarities by which each succeeding age was distinguished from the preceding one, rather than to travel over the wide field of general knowledge they offer so abundantly, we may remark that in the earlier part of the fifteenth century the style of ornamentation differed but little from that of the latter portion of the fourteenth.

In borders and in capital letters the ivy-leaf patterns, and the other conventional foliage, relieved by burnished gold and surrounded by black lines, still prevailed. But, by degrees, the more careful study of Nature led to the employment of a more truthful rendering of its most beautiful features, whether in the animal, the vegetable, or the insect world; and in combination with these more literal imitations, the use of mat, or powdered gold, applied with a brush, gradually took the place of its polished predecessor. At first, both modes of applying this metal were employed on the same designs; but the newer fashion continued to encroach on the older, till burnished gold was rarely used, except for boundary lines united with bands of colour, or for capital letters. In the sixteenth century mat gold only is found in the finest manuscripts, both in the French and Flemish schools. The first use of it appears to have been as the ground-work to marginal borders; but it grew so much in favour with illuminators that it was applied in very delicate lines of cross hatchings on the high lights of the rich draperies in their pictures, to represent the gay embroideries worked on them, to mark the prominent hair of the flowing curls of their female heads, and, in fact, to give brilliancy to every object on which it could be effectively employed.

In Flemish manuscripts, both of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, borders of an architectural character were common. These were usually in a very florid, but debased style. They were chiefly composed of niches, with their accessories, containing figures of sacred characters, and panels

filled with bas-reliefs, often remarkable for the great number of figures they contain, and the wonderful minuteness and accuracy with which they are painted. Occasionally, the borders were divided into panels, in which, on deeply toned grounds, were suspended strings of pearls, coral beads, or single jewels, set in rich chasings. It would be impossible, however, in any reasonable space, to enumerate all the modes of ornamental treatment found in books at this late period; we can, therefore, only point to those most frequently met with.

This mixture of the conventional with the natural was eventually superseded by compositions in which nature ruled over all; when flowers were supported on their proper stems, and surrounded by their proper leaves, and the very texture, as well as the form and colour of each individual feature of the composition, was most elaborately imitated.

Our engraving, containing a picture of the Annunciation, is taken from a copy of the "Offices of the Virgin," in the British Museum.\* It is an example of French art of the beginning of the sixteenth century, commencing, as usual, with a calendar, each page of which has on its upper margin one of the signs of the zodiac, and on the outer and lower ones, pictures showing the occupations of the months. It contains thirty-nine miniature paintings surrounded by borders, each of which is different in design and treatment. We know of no other volume presenting so great a variety of composition, such harmony of colouring, such exquisite blendings of the most delicate tints, and, at the same time, in so perfect a state of preservation.

One of the finest examples of French art, in its latest style, is found in the celebrated "Hours of Anne of Brittany," in the Musée des Souverains at Paris. The whole of this splendid volume has been published in chromolithography; but no amount of skill in printing can imitate, in a satisfactory manner, the marvellous elaboration and delicate tints of these wonderful drawings.

In the choice and valuable collection of Robert S. Holford, Esq. M.P., is a copy of "Hours," evidently the work of the same artists; not so extensive in its illustrations, but in some respects superior in point of taste. In that of Anne of Brittany, the miniature compositions are merely surrounded by flat bands of gold, bevelled at the edges, the whole of the margins beyond being of a dead black; forming a most offensive contrast with the gay colours they enclose; whilst in Mr. Holford's manuscript these pictures are placed in architectural frames of gold, in which columns and pilasters of the richest marbles, inlaid mosaics, and all the resources of renaissance architecture seem to have been employed.

In the early part of the sixteenth century a style of art prevailed to some

\* Additional MS. 15.677.

extent in French and Flemish manuscripts, which, from the small amount of colour employed, can scarcely be called illuminated. It is known under the name of “camaïeu gris,” and the drawings executed in this manner deserve careful attention for the wonderful skill they generally display in the treatment of light and shade, and the extraordinary minuteness and accuracy of all their details. A fine example may be seen in the British Museum, Harl. 625. The subject of its contents is an imaginary conversation between Francis I. of France and Julius Cæsar, respecting the wars of the latter in Gaul. It is a small upright book, measuring nine and three-quarter inches in height, by five inches in width. The text is beautifully written on the finest uterine vellum, and the dialogue is preceded by carefully-finished medallion portraits of Francis and Cæsar, on rich blue grounds. Incorporated in the text are numerous pictures of the battles, triumphs, and other scenes, under discussion. These pictures are painted in a rich grey, heightened with white; some of the details of the dresses, banners, &c, are picked in with gold, but positive colour is very sparingly introduced. The great number of figures and their accompaniments, shown in these small drawings, and the wonderful spirit and accuracy with which they are painted, can scarcely be appreciated without the aid of a microscope; and in examining them we can scarcely avoid feeling that, as works of art, they are superior to most of the glittering decorations where colour is made the ruling feature. A volume in the Bodleian Library, at Oxford, treated in this manner, made for Charles, Duke of Burgundy, is of great merit; and a smaller one of the “Offices of the Virgin,” in the same collection, is curious from its containing numerous miniatures in “camaïeu gris,” Flemish in character, surrounded by richly-coloured borders, apparently of English workmanship. The following inscription appears on a fly-leaf:—“ This Book was Q. Mary’s, and was lately thrice renowned Prince Henryes of blessed memorie, and now given to y<sup>e</sup> Publique Librarie of the Universitie of Oxford by Richard Cannock, Esquier, Auditor Generall Sollicitor & of his Highness Councill of Revenewe, who giveth the same as a monument worthie to be kept, not for the Religion it contains, but for the pictures & former Royal owners sake, and in regard of a note written especially herein by Q. Mary with her own hand July 13, 1615. Richard Cannock. Anno Regis Jacobi.”

Italian art has not been included in our chronological notices, for the simple reason that illuminations of Italian origin do not exhibit the constant changes of style found in the works of other Christian countries. All the earliest examples with which we are acquainted are Byzantine in character; and so continued till Giotto, Cimabue, and others broke through the trammels with which their predecessors had bound themselves by the eastern custom of following established fashions.









These great men went to Nature for models, to enable them to give scope to their inventive faculties, with a truthfulness which constant reference to realities could alone impart to their productions. These primitive examples, however, exhibit a large amount of conventional treatment, imperfect drawing, and a deficient acquaintance with the principles of perspective and chiaroscuro; but such deficiencies gradually disappeared, and henceforth painting, and all the other branches of art, continued to make progress, till they reached their highest degree of perfection in the latter part of the fifteenth and the first half of the sixteenth centuries.

In book decorations henceforth the style generally adopted was the renaissance, or the revival of ancient Roman characteristics, with such modifications as a new mode of treatment rendered necessary. These, like the larger works of the time, were at first comparatively rude; but as each succeeding age made an advance on the preceding one, the miniature paintings, with their decorative accessories, found in Italian manuscripts of the latter period, show an amount of refinement, of variety of invention, and of purely classical feeling, superior to the equally finished productions of all other schools.

One of the earliest of these illuminators of which we find any printed record is Oderigi of Gubbio, noticed by Dante in his "Purgatoria" (canto ix); he died about A. D. 1300. His more celebrated pupil, Franco Bolognese, likewise noticed by Dante, was living in 1313, and Simone Memmi, the painter of Laura, and by whom there is a miniature of Virgil in a manuscript of that poet in the Ambrosian Library, at Milan, died at Avignon, in 1342.

Vasari, in the life of Don Lorenzo, celebrated Don Jacopo, of Florence, as the most distinguished letter-writer of Europe; in the fourteenth century large letter-writing being a distinct occupation. This Don Jacopo left to his convent, Degl' Angeli, sixteen folio choral books, with miniature illustrations by a brother of the same convent, Don Silvestro; and their extraordinary skill was so highly venerated by their brother monks, that they embalmed their right hands after their death, and preserved them in a tabernacle.

The paintings of the most eminent Italian artists were occasionally copied in the large illuminated letters found in choral and other service-books. An interesting instance of this fact is found in a magnificent letter D, in the possession of Thomas Baring, Esq. M.P., which encloses a miniature painting of the Agony in the Garden, copied from a larger one in oil by Andrea Mantegna,—probably by one of his pupils. This painting by Mantegna also belongs to Mr. Baring.

Altavante, a Florentine artist of the fifteenth century, was one of the most celebrated illuminators of manuscripts. In the Library at Brussels is



## THE ART OF ILLUMINATION.

a magnificent Missal, illuminated by him for Matthias Corvinus, King of Hungary, on which the former regents of Belgium used to take their official oaths.

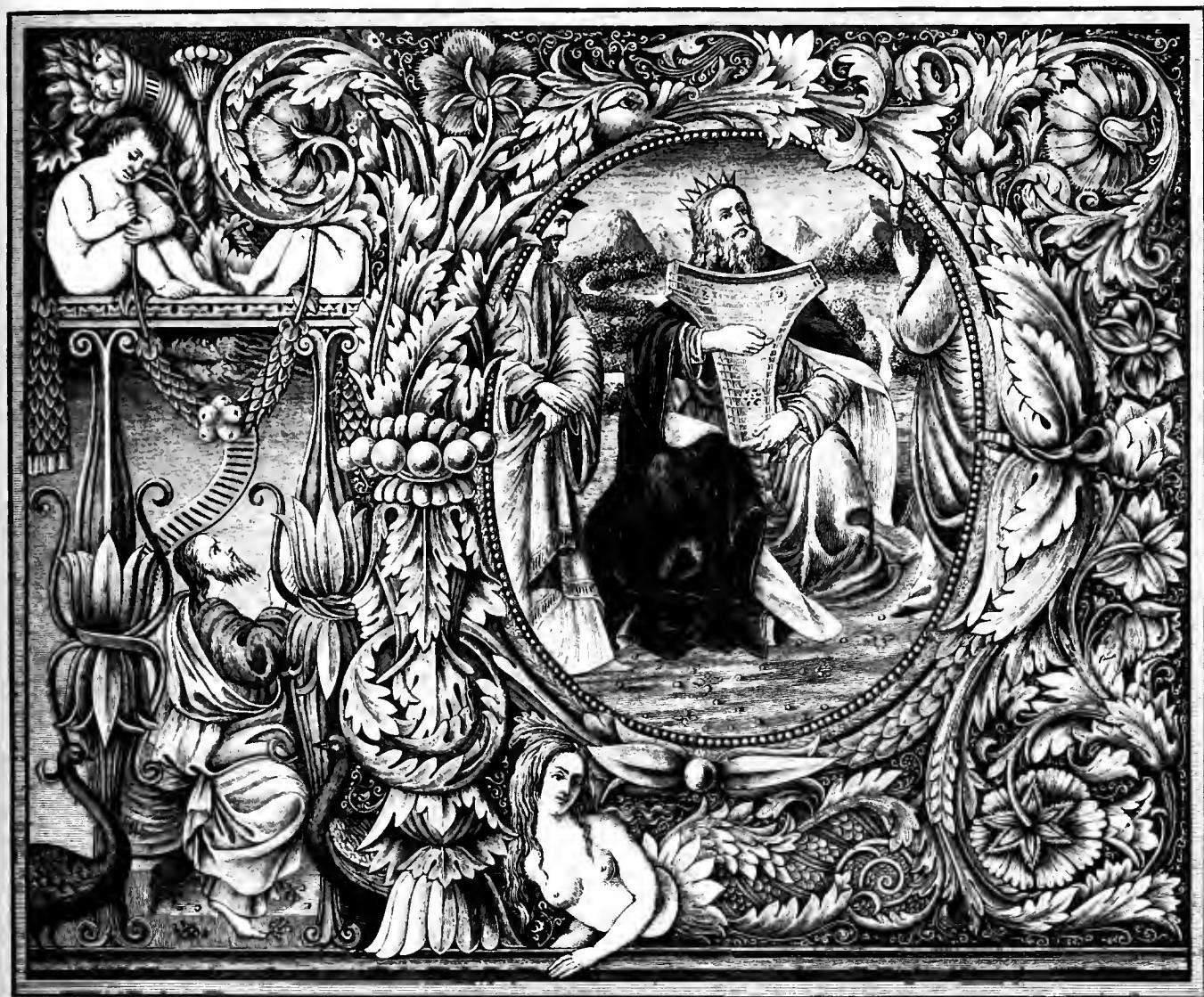
Among the many fine Italian volumes in the British Museum we would point special attention to Additional MS. 15,813, for the originality and beauty of its ornamental embellishments. It was written for the monastery of St. Justina, at Padua, in 1525-6, and illuminated by Benedetto Bordoni, of Padua. It has but one picture occupying a page; but ten chapters of this Missal commence with large square borders of rich and varied foliage, flowers, birds, and insects, having in the centre of each margin medallions filled with miniature pictures; the text is further illustrated with 1971 large initial letters, which generally enclose subjects taken from the service of the mass, or single figures of the apostles and other saints.

No single volume in the manuscript department of the National Library, we believe, offers so great a variety of beautiful ornamental designs as the one filled with fragments, which belonged to the late Samuel Rogers, and purchased by him from the much larger collection of the late William Young Ottley. They have been taken from service-books made for the following cardinals and popes, whose arms are emblazoned on many of them:—Cardinal Antonotto Pallavicini, A.D. 1489—1501; Pope Leo X, 1513—1521; Clement VII, 1523—1534; Pius IV, 1561—1564; and Gregory, 1572—1583. The most remarkable examples for originality, delicacy, and elaboration, are those made for Pius IV, on several of which the following inscription appears:—“Apollonius Bonfratelis di Caprenica, Capellæ et Sacristræ Apostolicæ Miniator, fecit Anno Domini MDLXIV.”

This series consists of 110 drawings. The first three pages belong to the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries, and are of coarse execution. These are followed by a letter P, the subject of our engraving. This is an exquisite drawing, but which has suffered much from ill treatment. It is difficult to imagine a composition more graceful and varied, or colouring more delicate and refined. King David is clothed in a crimson mantle heightened









with gold and lined with yellow, and an under garment of blue. The figure on his right has a robe of delicate purple over white, and the one on his left a light green over a light red. The seated figure between the columns is dressed in a yellow mantle lined with blue over purple. The foliage and flowers are of blue, green, yellow, and brown. The latter heightened with gold to imitate bronze. This letter is succeeded by a series of fifteen borders and fragments, with the arms and devices of Antoniotto Pallavicini. Then follows twenty-five long strips, all cut from the outer margin of the same MS, of a bold and masterly style, and which belonged to Leo X. After these are twenty-one drawings of a more refined and delicate character, from which our border has been selected. The stem and studs are of burnished gold, the vase a stone colour, the leaves green, and the branches and flowers of ultramarine, carmine, orange, and purple, the gradations being formed by the addition of white.

Then come twelve drawings made for Clement VII, all showing wonderful refinement and beauty. To these succeed thirteen frames, borders, and miniatures, most elaborately finished, and in the purest taste. The best of them are by Bonfratelis. The last of the series are thirteen examples of an ordinary character made for Gregory XIII.

Among those who carried the art of illumination to the highest degree of excellence we may mention Francesco Veronese and Girolamo da i Libri, who executed for the Duke of Urbino the celebrated copy of the "Hours of the Virgin," now in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. This is a most extraordinary example of extreme richness with wonderful finish, and the miniatures, with which it is profusely decorated, are, many of them, in beauty of design and purity of sentiment, worthy of the greatest masters.

The most celebrated illuminators of the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries were largely employed on the monster choral books then used in the service of the Church. The immense letters found in them were usually connected with rich marginal borders, and contained within themselves highly-finished pictures. Vasari, in enumerating the works of Fra Angelico, says:—"There are certain choral books from the hands of Fra Angelico in the cathedral of St. Marco, at Florence, of which the miniatures are such that no words could do justice to their beauty." Some fine examples of these initials and borders may be seen in the South Kensington Museum, in a series of leaves taken from various books of this class.

At the end of the fifteenth and during the first half of the sixteenth centuries choice copies of the classics and other popular books were printed on vellum, and illuminated by the most skilful artists of the time for distinguished persons. The great cost, however, of employing miniaturists

of the highest reputation, on works of so elaborate a nature, caused their labours to be commonly confined to one or two pages; the rest of the volume being enriched only with coloured borders and initial letters, or with the latter alone. The principal picture generally presents, in combination with the most florid arabesques and other ornaments, the portraits of the owners; and almost invariably on the lower margins, their arms, crests, and mottoes, fully displayed.

One of the most beautiful volumes in existence treated in this manner is in the Grenville Library of the British Museum. The title is as follows:—  
“La historia delle cose facte dallo invictissimo Duca Francesco Sforza, scripta in Latino da Giovanni Simoneta, et traducta in Lingua Fiorentina da Christoforo Landino.” Milano, Antonio Zarotto, 1490, folio. This is the presentation copy to Cardinal Sforza, and in the original velvet binding, with silver niello and knobs on the cover. The niello represent a fine portrait of Ludovico Il Moro, and the badges of the family of Sforza. The volume is beautifully printed on vellum of the finest texture, and is ornamented with thirty-four initial letters of the most exquisite finish. The first leaf of the text has a magnificently illuminated border round it, exhibiting a splendid specimen of the talent of Jerome Veronese (Girolamo da i Libri). It contains beautiful miniature portraits of Francesco Sforza, Cardinal Sforza, and Ludovico Maria Sforza, surnamed Il Moro. The remaining ornaments consist of the arms and devices of the Sforza family, and groups of children, in the best style of the Venetian School.

The copy of Christoforo Landino’s Italian translation of Pliny’s “Natural History,” printed on vellum at Venice, 1776, folio, in the Douce Collection, at the Bodleian Library, is a volume worthy to be classed with the above, and is even more gorgeous in its decorations. It is justly esteemed one of the most beautiful examples of the union of early typography and illumination in existence. It has generally been considered to be the copy presented to Ferdinand II, King of Naples and Sicily, to whom the work itself was dedicated, as the portrait of the king is often introduced in the borders which ornament the commencement of each book; but as the arms of Ferdinand are made subsidiary to those of the distinguished family of Strozzi, of Florence, it is more probable that it was executed for a member of that house.

Of equal beauty with the above, in its decorative features, is a manuscript in the Harleian Collection, 4965, containing the Latin translation of Eusebius’ “De Evangelica Preparatione,” by George of Trebisond, dedicated to Pope Nicholas V. The first page is surrounded by a beautiful border, in which are inserted small heads of Domitian, Agrippa, Nero, and another

Emperor, and beneath, the historical portraits of Cadmus and Carmenta. On the lower margin appear the arms of Ferdinand II. of Naples, who succeeded to the throne in 1459, and died in 1494.



ARIETY of treatment prevails to a greater extent in the later styles of Italian decoration than is found in illuminations of the same time of any other country. Our letter may be taken as a type of a simple mode of ornamentation frequently met with in manuscripts of the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth centuries, both for letters and borders. It consists of an elaborate interlacing of branches with projecting conventional leaves or flowers, very delicately outlined in brown, but either without colour or partially tinted with a pale yellow. The spaces between the branches are usually of blue, red, and green, about equally distributed. The letters and foliage are generally surrounded by bands of deep blue. These flat surfaces are relieved by minute dots of white, usually in groups of three, forming a triangle. The letters themselves and the outer bands enclosing the borders are almost invariably of burnished gold, sometimes having an edging of yellow.

Our specimen is taken from a manuscript in the British Museum, entitled, "Manetti, *De Dignitate et Excellentia Hominis*."\* On the first page is the following dedication in capital letters of raised and burnished gold:— "Ad Alfonsum clarissimum et gloriocissimum Aragonum Regem Ianotti Manetti prefatis incipit. Lege feliciter." This page is surrounded with a very elaborate border of the same character as the letter.

We will conclude our short notice of the Italian illuminators by a few references to the known works of the artist who is generally considered to have reached the highest degree of perfection among the many celebrated miniature painters who devoted their talents to the decoration of books. Julio Gravata, or, as he is generally called, Julio Clovio. He was born in 1498, in Sclavonia, or Croatia, at a town called Grisone, in the diocese of Madrucci. From his childhood he was kept to the study of letters, but he took to design by instinct; and, desirous of improvement, he came to Italy when he had attained his eighteenth year, attaching himself to the household of Marino, Cardinal Grimani.

\* Harleian, 2593.

Perceiving that he was more powerfully aided by Nature for minute works than for larger ones, he wisely became a miniaturist, to which he was advised by many friends, among whom was Julio Romano, who taught him to use tints and colours prepared with gum and in tempera.

Among the first works painted by Julio Clovio was a *Madonna*, which he copied from one of Albert Dürer's wood-engravings. This gained him the patronage of Ludovico, King of Hungary, and of his Queen Maria, the sister of Charles V. But Ludovico dying, and the affairs of Hungary falling into confusion, Julio was obliged to return to Italy, where he had scarcely arrived before Cardinal Campeggio (the elder) took him into his service.

His pursuits were interrupted by the sack of Rome, in 1527, when he was taken prisoner by the Spaniards; and finding himself in evil case, made a vow, that, if he escaped from these modern Pharisees, he would immediately make himself a monk. Being delivered, and having reached Mantua, he attached himself to the Scopetine canons regular, and took the habit in the monastery of San Ruffino, and obtained permission to work occasionally at his miniatures.

At this time he completed a large choral-book, with most delicate miniatures and beautiful borderings, among which was a story of our Saviour Christ appearing to Mary Magdalen in the Garden, which was considered extremely beautiful. Encouraged by success, Don Julio next painted the *Woman taken in Adultery*, the group comprising many figures of a much larger size than his works usually exhibit, copied from a picture by Titian.

Not long after the completion of these works he had the misfortune to break his leg. This accident coming to the ears of Cardinal Grimani, that prelate obtained permission from the Pope to take him into his own service; when our artist, throwing off the habit, and having had his leg cured, went to Perugia with the cardinal, who was legate in that city, where Don Julio executed for him the following works: an *Office of our Lady*, with four most beautiful stories; an *Epistolary*, with three large stories from the life of St. Paul, one of which was soon afterwards sent to Spain; and a most exquisite *Pietà* and a *Crucifix*, which came, after the death of Grimani, into the hands of Messer Giovanni Gaddi, clerk of the chamber.

These works made Don Julio known at Rome as an able artist; and Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, who always assisted, favoured, and desired to have about him distinguished and able men, having heard the fame and seen the works of this artist, took him into his service, where he remained to the end of his days. For this signore Don Julio executed a vast number of most beautiful illuminations and miniatures. In one of his small pictures

he painted the Madonna with the divine Child in her arms, and Pope Paul III. kneeling before her. This picture was sent, as an extraordinary work, to Charles V, then in Spain, who was quite astonished at the beauty and excellence thereof.

The cardinal then caused the artist to commence the miniature stories and illuminations for an Office of the Madonna, written in fine letters by Monterchi, who had a great reputation as a scribe. The series is divided into twenty-six small stories arranged in pairs, and represent the symbol with that which is symbolized ; each picture being surrounded by a delicate bordering of figures and fancies in harmony with the subject represented.

Of these pictures, Vasari says :—“ Nine years did Don Julio labour over this work, which could never be paid for, so to speak, whatever the price that might be given for it ; the variety of fanciful ornaments, the divers attitudes and movements of the figures, nude and draped, male and female, placed in the most appropriate manner for the embellishment of the whole, with the beauty of every detail, and the studious care given to all points, are not to be described. The diversity and excellence of this production are indeed such as to make it seem not of human so much as of divine origin. The figures, the buildings, and the landscapes, are all made duly to recede by the art of the master, and the nice arrangement of his colours ; the laws of perspective are observed in every particular, and whether near or far, each portion of the work maintains its due place and is viewed with surprise and admiration ; the trees, to say nothing of other parts, are so well done, that they seem to have been made in Paradise.

“ In the stories and inventions of these pictures, there is the most admirable design ; in the compositions, the most perfect order ; the vestments are singularly rich and varied ; while the whole work is conducted in such a manner that one thinks it could not possibly have been executed by the hands of man ; wherefore, it is perfectly true, as we said at the first, that in this performance Don Julio has surpassed both the ancients and moderns, having been the Michael Angelo in little of our day.”

This volume is now deposited in the private library of the King of Naples, in a gold cover profusely enriched with gems of great value.

He painted many other pictures for the cardinal, some of which were presented to the Emperor Charles V, Philip II. of Spain, to Pope Paul IV, the Emperor Maximilian, and other royal and noble personages. The well-known *Dante* in the Vatican Library is another example of the glories of his pencil. One of the drawings, with an elegant marginal border, in this volume, has been most delicately engraved and most skilfully coloured, in the “ *Palæographie Universelle*, par M. Silvestre.”

But few specimens of Clovio's work have reached this country. The best known are those belonging to Mr. Townley, Mr. Fountaine, and the fine large folio volume in the Soane Museum. The contents of the latter are commentaries on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, and its only picture a representation of the conversion of St. Paul, within a border containing allegorical figures, trophies, and medallions. This is followed by the title, which has a border of the same character, and in one of its medallions appears a highly-finished portrait of Cardinal Grimani. The authenticity of these drawings is proved by the artist's own signature in a corner of the border of the frontispiece, which may be literally translated thus:—"For Marina Grimani, Cardinal and Legate of Perugia, his patron, painted by Julio Gravata;" his surname of Clovio being rarely found on his works.

The British Museum has recently acquired an exquisite little volume by this master, which shows his almost miraculous power of minute elaboration, combined with the greatest delicacy and richness of colouring. It is a copy of the "Offices of the Virgin," measuring only five and three-quarter inches by three and three-quarter inches, and contains pictures of the Annunciation, the meeting of Mary and Martha, the Virgin and Child, and the Saviour, within borders studded with cameos, and the richest combinations of figures and arabesques. It has suffered sadly from ill treatment, but it is a glorious example of miniature painting even as a ruin.

Of the authenticity of the twelve drawings contained in a volume in the Grenville Library, in the British Museum, representing the victories of Charles V, which have been attributed to Julio Clovio, we entertain the most serious doubts, as a careful comparison with the little volume last referred to, or the other well-known works of Clovio, will, we believe, show that these pictures have none of the characteristics of his style of treatment, either in drawing, colouring, or manipulation. Dibden in his Bibliographical Decameron, says:—"In 1556, Martin Hemskirk engraved and dedicated to Philip II. twelve plates from the paintings of the victories of Charles V. Philip had tapestries made of these designs, and directed Julio Clovio, at that time in Italy, to paint them on vellum." But he offers no evidence in support of these statements, we may therefore fairly ask what became of these paintings? or these tapestries? If they had an existence, they would most probably have been deposited in one of the royal palaces of Spain, from which it is not likely they would have been removed, unless surreptitiously, or as plunder. In either of these cases, the chances are in favour of our having some means of tracing them; also, is it likely that if Clovio had made these drawings from the secondary authority of tapestries, he would not have imparted to them something of Italian feeling or character?

On the title-page to the book of engravings it appears that they were published at Antwerp by "Hieronimus Cocq, peintre," and that the plates were engraved by Cocq and Theodore Corenhert. In the print representing the entry of Charles into Tunis, in 1535, the name of M. Heemskerke is given as inventor, and under it, "D. V. Caverenhol, fecit," and the picture of the battle of Muhlberg, in 1535, is accompanied by a careful and spirited pen-drawing in brown colour of the same, with this inscription in the corner of it:—"Martinus van Hemskerk, inventor, 1554." In the print this inscription is omitted, and in its place appears, "M. Cock cum privileg." This drawing is the reverse of the coloured one, probably to facilitate the labour of the engraver. There is no date to any of these drawings, and, as the name of Hemskerke is the only one that appears as "inventor," there can be little doubt that he had a large share in their production; nor does it appear to us, that, rich and elaborate as they are, they show a greater amount of skill than he is known to have possessed, with the exception of the last, the Landgrave of Hesse surrendering in the presence of the Pope's Legate and various bishops and princes. This is a marvellously beautiful work, but painted with a degree of solidity rather characteristic of the Flemish than the Italian school.

One of the most gorgeous series of drawings of the latter part of the sixteenth century is contained in a manuscript volume on alchemy, finished in 1582, in the British Museum.\* It is beautifully written, and each chapter begins with a most elaborate and intricate capital letter, formed of interlaced scroll-work, such as we commonly find in German manuscripts and printed books of this time, all in gold. The numerous pictures are sometimes surrounded with architectural frames, and in others with borders of flowers, birds, insects, &c, cleverly composed, but wanting the refinement of earlier art.

As an example of illumination, as it was continued to the end of the sixteenth century, we may refer to the "Book of Hours" which belonged to the ducal family of St. Croy, dated in 1601, in the British Museum.† It contains some interesting portraits within very rich frames, some fine examples of heraldry, and a profusion of borders, gaudily coloured, but poor in design, and debased in style.

Occasional instances may be met with of the employment of this art to a much later period, as shown in the gorgeous volume executed for Philip IV, King of Spain, in 1637, by Francesco de Herrera, in the Hafod library. But, perhaps, the last important specimen remaining is the magnificent missal in the public library at Rouen, nearly three feet in height, which

\* Harleian MS. No. 3469.

† Additional MS. 8824.

occupied the labour of a monk of St. Oudoen for thirty years, and was completed in 1682.

We have taken our illustrations of the beautiful art of illumination almost wholly from examples of the English, French, Flemish, and Italian schools, as showing the most decided distinctions of style, rather than a want of appreciation of the high degree of perfection to which it arrived in other countries. In each of these some peculiarity of treatment may be found, differing from that to which it bears the closest general affinity ; and even local characteristics are seen which it would be difficult to explain in words.

German art was second only to Flemish, and for its decorative distinctions and peculiarities, we would refer to the many fine designs to be seen in the South Kensington Museum, on leaves taken from large choral books of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Some splendid borders and large initial letters of a similar character enrich a magnificent copy on vellum of the first printed Bible by Fust and Schoeffer, in the British Museum, dated 1462 ; and this, as well as most great libraries, contain an abundance of examples, both in illuminations and also in early engravings on wood.

Neither Portugal nor Spain can be said to have had a distinct school of its own, but rather to have engrafted a few novelties on what they found in others. Hence, the embellishments of their finest illuminated manuscripts were made gay with borrowed plummage, rather than the exercise of any great original native talent.

One of the most beautiful series of drawings in the British Museum was made for Fernando, third son of Emanuel, and brother of John, Kings of Portugal, by Mary of Arragon and Castile, who was born in 1507, and died in 1534. It consists of eleven leaves of a very richly illuminated, but unfinished, work on vellum, designed to show the alliances of the royal houses of Spain and Portugal, from the earliest period to the beginning of the sixteenth century.

The following is a brief description of the subjects of this splendid work.  
I. A leaf intended for the prologue, for which a vacant space is left. At the head are the arms of Portugal richly displayed, with a label of three points argent, for difference, the first and third points charged with Leon and Castile quarterly, being, apparently, the armorial distinction of the Infante Don Fernando. On the sides are supporters, two savage men proper, each holding a shield, bearing the following device: per pale argent and gules, a brazen serpent on a cross or, standing on a mount vert, with the motto "salus vite" on a scroll. On the border are represented subjects of a mythological character. II. A leaf intended for the gene-

ration of Magog, with a blank space left for the explanatory text; on the border are very spirited figures of eleven giants, or fabulous personages, in various attitudes, representing their descent from Unor to Bonfield. III. "Tronco dos Reyes de Liam e Castela," being a table of the first kings of Spain, or rather of Asturias, after the invasion of the Moors; viz. from Favilla, father of Pilago I, to Vilmeran, son of Alfonzo I, A.D. 757. IV. Entitled, "Tronco dos Reyes d'Aragam," containing the first kings of Navarre, from Don Inēgo Arista, who died about A.D. 888, to Don Sancho Abarca, who died in 926. V. Continuation of the preceding; viz. from Garcia, son of Sancho Abarca, to Sancho III, and his sons Ferdinand, Garcia, and Ramiro, Kings of Castile, Navarre, and Arragon. VI. Table showing the descent of Don Henry of Portugal from Stephen, King of Hungary. VII. and VIII. Tables representing the kings of Portugal from Alfonzo Anriquez, who died in 1185, to Alfonzo II, who died in 1223; showing also the descent of the latter from Raymond Berengarius, Count of Barcelona. IX. Table showing the descent from Sancho Capello and Alfonzo III, sons of Alfonzo II, to Alfonzo IV, to Solado, who died in 1357, and his children. X. Table showing the connection of the house of Portugal with England and Burgundy; viz. from John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, and Philip the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, to Maximilian, son of Eleanor of Portugal, who married Mary, daughter of Charles the Bold of Burgundy. XI. An unfinished table, carefully drawn and shaded with a pen, intended to show the descent of John II, King of Portugal, who died in 1495, from John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster.

All these tables are contained in panels filled with spreading branches of the most luxuriant foliage, on which are seen standing, sitting, or in the shape of busts only, the leading persons of the various pedigrees, and their alliances. Some of the sovereigns appear in elaborate suits of golden armour, while others are in their civil robes; but all are attired in garments of the richest materials, more especially the females, whose dresses are composed of velvets, silks, ermine, and embroideries, with a profusion of pearls and precious stones. The heads are admirably painted, and all the details are finished with the minute elaboration and care of a Van Eyck or a Memling.

The shields accompanying each portrait are nearly all left in outline, as are the various labels intended for inscriptions.

The margins of these pictures are occupied with representations of the leading battles or other important events by which the various dynasties were distinguished. Some are shown under rich canopies, and others within square panels. They are all remarkable for spirited composition, rich

colouring, careful drawing, and the wonderful distinctness of the crowds of almost microscopic figures which appear in the different scenes.

The following are the subjects which appear on the margins of the Tablets from Nos. III. to X :—III. At foot is represented a battle, probably that of St. Marion de Cabadonga, fought in 718. IV. On the margin are three miniatures; 1. The Coronation of Garcia Inhegez; 2. The Death of Garcia and his Queen Urraca, with the posthumous birth of Sancho Abarca; 3. A miraculous Vision of a Cross; at the foot is a battle, probably the defeat of the Moors by Sancho Abarca before Pampeluna. V. At the side is the battle gained over Almanzor; and at the foot are representations of the lists prepared for the combat between Ramiro and his half brothers. VI. At the foot are shown: 1. An army under Don Henry's banner leaving Portugal to compose the differences between Castile and Arragon; 2. Don Henry leaving Portugal in a galley, bearing his arms, for the Holy Land, to assist Baldwin, King of Jerusalem. VII. and VIII. At the foot are representations of Lisbon and Santarem on the Tagus, with the proclamation of Alfonzo as king, in 1139, after the battle of Aurica. On the left margin are painted: 1. The vision which appeared to him before the battle; and 2. The battle in which he defeated Alfonzo Raymond, King of Castile. On the right margin are two battles with the Moors. IX. At the foot is the battle of Salado, fought in 1340. X. On the lower margin are portraits of the Dukes of Burgundy descended from John, King of France.

The headings and names throughout are in Portuguese, but the drawings are evidently by Flemish artists, though many of them appear to have been founded on Italian models.

These drawings were purchased in the year 1842 of Mr. Newton Scott, one of the attachés to the embassy at Madrid, who bought them there, and are considered so precious, that the leaves have been separately mounted and covered with glass to save them from the common accidents to which such articles are exposed.

In our work on the "Dresses and Decorations of the Middle Ages," published in 1843, we gave five carefully-coloured engravings from this magnificent series of drawings. No. I. was a whole-length figure of Philippa, the eldest daughter of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, and queen of Joham, or John I, King of Portugal. She was married to that monarch in 1387, and died about 1415.

The queen is most gorgeously attired. Over a head-dress of white linen bordered with gold and arranged in graceful folds, she wears a jewelled crown; her mantle, which reaches to the ground, is of cloth of gold covered with crimson embroidery, in which the pomegranate forms a leading feature.

This robe is surrounded by a border formed of a double row of pearls, between which are minute arabesque patterns in needlework, the collar garnished with jewels. It is lined with green silk, and fastened by a large brooch studded with precious stones. Her under garment is of puce colour covered with a rich pattern of a deeper tint blended with gold. Round the bottom of this dress is a broad band like that on the mantle, on which are placed at intervals rubies, emeralds, and sapphires, in rich mountings of gold. Her sleeves are blue with gold bracelets, beyond which appear those of her white under garment, which is elaborately pleated round her neck. From her girdle is suspended a chain, jewelled at intervals, and terminating in a cluster of pearls. Even her foot-stool is of embroidered gold, with bands of pearls, ending with a tassel of blue silk proceeding from a mass of these delicate gems.

No. II. was a sitting portrait of Constancia, the second wife of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster. His first wife was Blanche Plantagenet, the great heiress of the Duchy of Lancaster, which he inherited through her. After her death he espoused Constancia, elder daughter and co-heiress of Peter, King of Castile, in whose right he assumed the title of King of Castile and Leon, and was summoned to parliament by that title.

The dress of the Duchess is very gorgeous, though less elaborate in its style than that of Queen Philippa. Over a cap of gold needlework, richly diapered, and covered with small pearls, she wears a horned head-dress of crimson velvet. Her gown is of the same rich material lined and trimmed with fur. The sleeves are of gold, with patterns in black outline, and her under garment is of light blue richly embroidered and trimmed with bands of black velvet.

Our other illustrations were Queen Leonora of Arragon, King John of Portugal, and Queen Johanna of Castile.

Only the portraits of those who lived contemporaneously, or near the time when these drawings were made, can be looked upon as likenesses; but they form a magnificent collection of the regal, military, and civil costume of the period.

Our national library contains but few examples of Spanish illumination. The earliest is a large folio volume on vellum, in a beautiful state of preservation, containing a comment upon, and interpretation of, the Apocalypse.\* It was executed in the Monastery of Silos, in the diocese of Burgos (old Castile), having been begun under the Abbot Fortunius, carried on after his death during the Abbacy of Nunnus (Nuñez), and completed in the time of Abbot John, in the year 1109. This information we obtain from

\* Additional MS. 11,695.

the manuscript itself; and as it thus appears to have occupied not less than twenty years in writing and illuminating, we may with propriety consider it as representing the costume of the latter part of the eleventh century. This volume was purchased by the trustees of the British Museum in 1840 of the Comte de Survilliers (Joseph Buonaparte).

The style of the drawings in this manuscript is itself half Saracenic. The elegance of the ornaments contrasts strongly with the unskilful rudeness in the designs of men and animals, a circumstance which reminds us of the repugnance among the Arabs to drawing men and living beings. It is in many respects a valuable monument of art, and proves clearly the intercourse which existed between the Moors and the Christians in Spain. Throughout the volume the architecture of the buildings is altogether Moorish: the walls covered with arabesque ornaments, and the remarkable horse-shoe arches, appear on almost every page, and show the accuracy of the term Saracenic adopted by architectural writers. The character of the ornamental initial letters bears a close resemblance to that observed in many of our Anglo-Saxon manuscripts of the tenth century, and the figures are identical with those on the Bayeux tapestry.

A most interesting series of Spanish Illuminations is found in a volume entitled, "Les Lois d'Alfonse, Roi de Castile,"\* purchased at the sale of the late Lord Stuart de Rothsay, in 1855.

Besides numerous capital letters enclosing groups of figures, there are sixteen miniature pictures within square frames, at the heads of various chapters. The first represents the King on his throne surrounded by the different orders of the state. The other miniatures are illustrations of the more important enactments, and appear under rubricated headings. These pictures are remarkable for the wonderful delicacy of their outlines, more particularly with regard to the heads of the figures, in which, in almost invisible lines, the greatest truthfulness of expression is preserved. The draperies are very graceful, and the arrangement of the groups and distribution of the actors are both skilful and natural, while the action of the different figures is full of energy in the more exciting scenes, and of quiet propriety in those of a religious character.

The distinctive difference between these illuminations and those of other countries of Europe at the same date, is due to the sombre heaviness of the colouring employed on the former. This arises from black being freely employed in shading the draperies, while indigo is used on the blue dresses, and also on the shadows of the buildings, although ultramarine appears throughout the volume for small capital letters. The purples are composed

\* Additional MS. 20,787.

of the same dull colour in combination with carmine, and green is altogether absent.

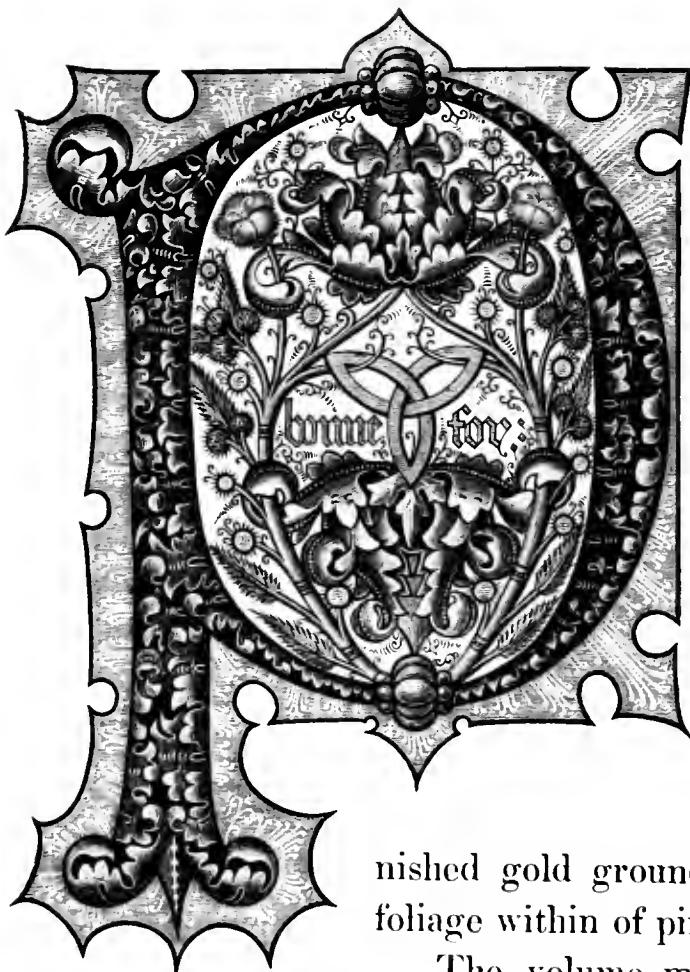
The Spanish character is strongly marked on many of the heads, and a few singular specimens of costume appear in some of the groups. The architectural backgrounds also are very curious and interesting from the variety and precision of their details.

This manuscript belongs to about the middle of the fourteenth century, and may be placed a little later than Queen Mary's Psalter, with which it assimilates in the character of its drawing; but is in striking contrast in the style of its colouring. In the one the beauty of the design is almost obscured by the heaviness and coarseness of the pigments employed; while in the other the exquisitely delicate outlines are enriched by equally delicate tints of the brightest colours, in which a lively green and a brilliant orange give variety to the blues, greens, and more quiet tones.

The British Museum contains also a fine specimen of Spanish art of the latter part of the fifteenth century, in a copy of the "Hours of the Virgin."\* It is embellished with numerous miniatures, elaborate borders, and initial letters. They are French in style, but the colouring throughout is marked by the heavy gloomy effects generally found in Spanish paintings, whether on a large or a small scale.

The most gorgeous specimen of Italian and Spanish art combined with which we are acquainted, is in a volume in the British Museum, from which we have taken the letter P on the next leaf, and the same letter and the text forming the following plate. The title is enclosed within a border, the whole of which is most elaborately finished. It is formed of branches of continuous scroll-work of a very peculiar character, in brown colour, carefully shaded and heightened with fine lines of a delicate yellow. These scrolls enclose flowers and foliage of the richest tints, and are covered at their junctions with coloured leaves, while the centre of each curve has a band of jewels. In the upper margin are seen two boys playing the game of quintain, and on the inner margin is a grandee, and on the outer his lady, both in dresses of the richest character. At intervals appear amorini playing musical instruments, and between the scrolls are rabbits in various attitudes, while parrots and other birds appear on the branches. The lower margin of the border contains the arms, supporters, mottoes, and devices of Arragon, Navarre, and Sicily. It has also the monogram of the unknown artist.

\* Additional MS. 18,193.



RINCE CHARLES OF VIANA, SON OF JOHN II, KING OF NAVARRE, MADE THIS TRANSLATION OF THE ETHICS OF ARISTOTLE FROM THE LATIN VERSION OF LEONARDO ARETINO, INTO ROMANCE, FOR HIS UNCLE, ALFONSO V, KING OF ARRAGON, WHO DIED ON THE 27TH OF JUNE, 1458.

The first paragraph of the title is preceded by a small illuminated letter, and continued in plain capitals of blue and gold alternately. The second follows the P on this page. The letter itself is blue on a burnished gold ground diapered with light yellow. The foliage within of pink, green, and orange.

The volume measures twelve and a-half inches in height by eight inches and three-quarters in width, is beautifully written on 238 folios of the finest vellum, and is in an admirable state of preservation.

The volume contains ten large letters similar to our engraving. They are all Moorish in character, some of gold, others coloured; but all interlaced with the most delicate branches, from which proceed marginal borders in the purest Italian taste. Our letter is of burnished gold on the surface, the returns being of a light brown. The ground colours are green, red, and blue, according to their relative intensity. The text is further enriched with 137 small capitals, equally elaborate in design and delicate in its details with the larger ones.

The invention of printing, and the introduction of wood-engravings, had little effect on the art of illumination as employed in the embellishment of books, until towards the middle of the sixteenth century; after which they gradually superseded these more costly appliances, and although examples remain to show that it still existed to a much later period, they display a gradual degeneracy of taste, until it wholly disappeared.



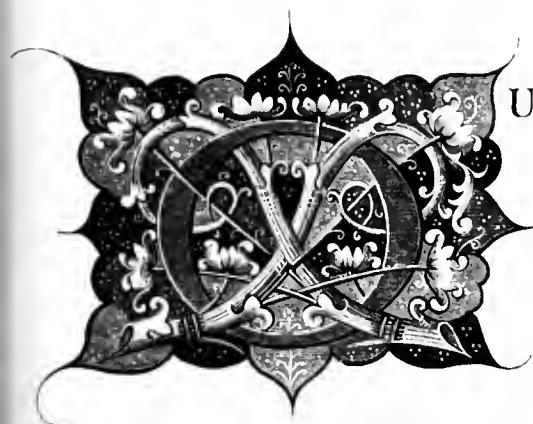


En este primero Capitulo son conteni das dos conclusiones. La primera dize por la union de las partes del anima fecha en el Capitulo. xix. del libro primero introduze fablar dela parte que en el entendimiento consiste. La segunda por la diferencia de las dos partes dize que la que harazon se parte en dos partes la una scientifica e la otra raciocinativa.

## Primeras Conclusiones.

ORAS QUE  
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ROCOIX  
NDES. EL  
AEGO. SER. DE  
REGE KJR. ZERO  
non el exceso nin el defecto. El medio es assi





UR brief essay on the Art of Illumination seems to require, as an appendix, a chapter descriptive of the metals, pigments, and processes, employed by the artists of the middle ages in the embellishment of manuscripts.

As an introduction we would observe that the subdivision of labour was, at that time, as

systematically pursued in the production of a book, as it is in modern times in articles made by machinery or by manual labour, when formed of a number of component parts.

The first operator was the scribe, who commenced his work by running down the sides of each page a wheel armed with teeth at equal distances, an instrument still used by law stationers. Very delicate lines, generally red, but sometimes brown, were then ruled from these point marks across each page. Within these lines he wrote his text, leaving spaces for the capital letters, miniatures, or other coloured decorations. The scribe was followed by the illuminator of initials, borders, and other ornamental accessories, and succeeded by the miniaturist. When heraldry was introduced, it appears to have formed the last process.

The many manuscripts still remaining in an unfinished state, in all these stages of progress, are sufficient to show the order in which they followed each other.

Of the implements employed the pen may be considered the most important. The earliest example we have of the general use of the quill pen has been found in that part of the ruins of Pompeii which has been named "the Street of the Silversmiths," in a very rude delineation on a wall of a profile bust of a scribe named Faventius, having a long feather pen behind his ear, with an inscription declaring his name and occupation, and entreating for him the patronage of the *Ædile*.\*

In the seventh century, St. Isidore states that writers were accustomed to employ either reeds or sticks taken from trees, that is to say, wooden styles, or the feathers of a bird. But a document has been published by Adrian of Valois as early as the fifth century, to which Theodoric, King of the Ostro-Goths, subscribed the first four letters of his name, written with a feather pen.†

The goose-quill seems to have been used in ancient as in modern times,

\* Pompeii. "Library of Entertaining Knowledge," 1836, vol. i. pp. 133, 134.

† "Encyclopédie Méthodique Antiquités," 1792. vol. iv. p. 754. "Plume pour écrire."

for drawing or writing of a bold character; but there can be no doubt that the feathers of the crow or other small birds must have been employed by the artists of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, whose drawings exhibit a degree of delicacy in their outlines scarcely to be rivalled by the use of the finest steel pens of the present day. The metal ruling pen and the compass pen must have been introduced at a very early time, as the fine divisional lines above alluded to could scarcely have been ruled with the necessary accuracy with a feather, and the compass points with which the circles and segments of circles were struck are still visible on the most ancient drawings.

Cannino Cannini, in his treatise on painting, written in 1437,\* devotes several chapters of his work solely to such drawings as were to be made on parchment or paper, to tracing outlines with a metal style or a quill pen, and to tinting them with light colours previous to the final painting. The pencil which was used for ordinary sketching at this early period on paper or parchment was a style of silver, or of brass with a silver point, "fine and polished," says Cannino, who also states, "it is possible to draw on parchment with a style of lead; that is, with two parts of lead and one of tin well beaten together," the marks of which may be removed by crumbs of bread.

As the sponge cannot be employed upon vellum to remove any dirt or discolouration it may receive, the design should be first carefully drawn upon paper, and the outline traced and transferred to the vellum. The best mode of effecting this is to take a second piece of tracing paper and rub the one side carefully and equally with black lead; then place the blackened side next to the vellum with the tracing above it, and with the point of a hard pencil pass over all the details of your cartoon.

To protect the margin from injury during the progress of the picture, it should be covered with a piece of paper fastened on the outer edges of the drawing-board, the centre of which has been removed as far as the extreme boundary of the composition.

After drawing very carefully in outline the various parts of the design, the metals were applied to the spaces left for them. Gold was sometimes employed in the shape of leaf, and sometimes of powder, but in early examples it seems invariably to have been burnished.

Theophilus, who is supposed to have written his treatise in the early part of the thirteenth century, gives the following directions for its application:—"In laying on gold, take the clear part of the white of egg, which is beat up without water, and with a pencil paint lightly over the part on

\* Translated by Mrs. Merrifield, London, 1844. 8vo.

which the gold is to be placed, and the handle of the same brush being wetted in your mouth, touch one corner of the cut leaf, and elevating it, lay it on with the greatest quickness and spread it even with a brush. And at the moment you must be aware of a current of air and refrain from breathing, because if you blow you lose the leaf and with difficulty recover it. When this is laid on and dried, superpose another upon it, if you wish, in the same manner, and a third likewise, if it is necessary, that you may be able to polish it more brightly with a tooth or stone."

This method did not produce a perfectly polished result, as the size employed had not sufficient substance to prevent the uneven face of the vellum being, to some extent, apparent on the burnished surface of the gold. This style of gilding may be closely imitated by the use of the powdered gold now sold in shells, if laid on solidly with the brush and carefully burnished.

The next stage in the employment of this metal on manuscripts came into fashion early in the thirteenth century; when, on raised grounds, it was burnished to such perfection that, when applied to the backgrounds of miniatures and initial letters, it appeared like polished plates of solid gold.

The processes connected with this brilliant result have sadly puzzled those who have attempted to do likewise by following ancient authorities. We think it unnecessary to quote largely from these writers, as we have made experiments from most of their prescriptions without any very satisfactory result.

In Sir Gardner Wilkinson's "Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians," he says:—"Other ancient directions for executing raised gilding, require that the grounds should be laid in gess-grosso and gesso-sotile, tempered with the white of eggs; which are, in effect, plaster of Paris combined with animal size, a composition not very dissimilar to that employed by the modern makers of picture-frames."

We have made the nearest approach to the brilliancy of ancient burnished gold by following literally the present practice of gilders on wood; a practice which there can be little doubt has been continued by their craft from the earliest ages, although it ceased to be employed upon vellum when the art of illumination became extinct in Europe. This process consists in making a preparation of size and whiting, which should be dissolved by being warmed over the fire, when the pattern must be painted with this mixture. When dry, it should be gone over again, till it is sufficiently raised. Then carefully scrape off the roughness with a steel scraper such as engravers use, and pass evenly over it one layer of gold size. Let this dry, then burnish it carefully. Being now ready for gilding, spread a leaf

of gold on your cushion, cut into the required sizes; then take up a piece on the tip, and with a brush and clean cold water moisten the work.\* While it is still wet, gently lay on the gold, which will be dry in an hour or two. To get a greater body of gold you may repeat this process, taking care to wet the surface each time. When perfectly dry it may be burnished. Theophilus says this process should be performed with a tooth or bloodstone upon a smooth and shining horn tablet. We have inserted in our drawing-board a piece of plate glass under the parts to be burnished. Both the size for mixing with the whiting and the gold size may be bought at the gilder's colour shops. As the latter is of a grey tint, it is advisable to make it as nearly as possible of a golden colour, by the addition of a little chrome-yellow and bol-ammoniac, when, should the gold be imperfect in any part of the work, it will not be so readily perceived.

If our imitations are not equal to ancient originals, we attribute their comparative failure to the inferiority of the chief material employed, rather than to any mistake in the mode of applying it.

The gold leaves now sold are much thinner than those formerly prepared, and, from the greater quantity of alloy incorporated with them, they are less malleable, and also are deficient in the rich and glowing colour of gold in a more pure state.

Cennine, under the heading of "What gold is proper for burnishing?" says:—"You should know that the gold proper for flat surfaces is that of which 100 leaves only are made from the ducat, and not from which 145. Cornices and foliage require thinner gold, and for the delicate fringes and ornaments laid on with a mordant, the gold should be very thin indeed."

In an interview we had many years ago with the late Sir Gore Ouseley, to examine some of his Oriental manuscripts, so marvellous for their minute and delicate manipulation, both with regard to gold and colours, he told us

\* The gilder's cushion is made of a piece of wood generally measuring about nine inches by six, having on the upper surface a covering of soft wash leather over a stuffing of wool, and a protection of raised parchment to the edges of three of its sides to prevent the gold flying off; the knife for cutting the gold is long and flexible, perfectly straight, and cutting on one side only. The "tip" with which the gold leaf is applied is formed by placing a line of badger-hair between two thin pieces of card-board, and is generally about three inches wide. It should be drawn across the hair or face each time it is used, as the trifling moisture it thus acquires causes the gold leaf slightly to adhere to it. Great care is required in transferring the gold leaves from the books in which they are purchased to the cushion. Gilders manage it by breathing under the leaf in the direction it is wished to send it, and flatten it on the cushion by gently blowing or breathing. When laid on the sized surfaces, it should be pressed down by a "dabber" formed of a small portion of wool covered with a piece of fine silk, or a camel-hair brush may be employed on the rounded surfaces of raised gold.

that when he held the post of ambassador in Persia, he always had one or more illuminators in his service, engaged on the embellishment of documents of public importance, whose practice, no doubt, according to Eastern customs in general, had been unchanged from remote ages. These artists would use no gold but that prepared from the Venetian ducat, which, in their estimation, was the most pure that could be procured.

In manuscripts, when this burnished gold was spread over large surfaces, it was commonly enriched by one of the following processes. Sometimes by diapers of elaborate scroll-work in lines, and sometimes by patterns composed of a series of dots impressed upon it. The best tool for these operations is an etching-needle with the point rounded.

In very elaborate drawings, especially of the French and Italian schools during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the gold was made to sparkle by being covered with patterns of so delicate a character, that we have only been able to reproduce them by the sharp point of the finest sewing-needle.

Occasionally flowers, badges, and other ornaments were impressed from metal punches, and a very agreeable variety is found in many manuscripts, where, instead of the patterns being impressed, they are raised on the surface in a delicate opaque colour composed of yellow and white.

The metal next in importance to gold is silver, which was employed in illuminations of all periods, but more largely in drawings of an early date than in those of a later time. In the former, the large initial letters, borders, and many of the other details, were chiefly composed of simple layers of gold and silver within red and black outlines. The original beauty and brilliancy of these, almost invariably, clever compositions have been sadly marred by the blackened state of the silver from oxidation.

In more recent examples we have met with many instances in which this metal has retained in a remarkable manner its original freshness. We would particularly allude to the prayer-book of Henry VI. before described, in which the glass in the windows of the various interiors are so admirably imitated by the lozenge-shaped quarries being formed by ruled lines in black over silver; and in many manuscripts in which warriors appear in silver, or silvered armour.

The almost unchanged appearance of the drawings in these books could only arise from their being but rarely exposed to the action of light and atmospheric influences, or to the silver having been fixed to the vellum in leaves on a preparation of size, and secured from all sinister action on its surface by the protection of a varnish. Powdered silver laid on with the brush cannot receive this protection, as on the application to it of any liquid

the two substances become amalgamated, and a portion of the silver floats uncovered to the surface.

As a substitute for this metal we employ aluminium, which we believe to be permanent, and is now prepared in powder and sold in shells. It has not quite the shining brightness of silver, but being slightly subdued in tone, it is frequently more in harmony with the surrounding colours; in contrast with which the former metal often assumes an offensive prominence. Platinum, which is also permanent, may be used in preference to silver, but it is much more costly, and not so brilliant as aluminium.

Tin seems to have been employed from a very early period, both for illuminating manuscripts, and also for mural decorations. Theophilus gives instructions for its preparation, both in the shape of leaf, and also of powder. Few of the volumes, however, in which it appears in either state have come under our notice. One of the most interesting instances is in a fine copy of the Gospels, bearing the date of 1128, in the Bodleian Library, at Oxford. The tin is in powder, and, if the coarseness of its texture may be taken as an average example of this preparation, it is not surprising that it was but rarely used as a substitute for its fugitive relative.

In a beautiful volume of the "Hours of the Virgin," in the possession of Robert S. Holford, Esq. M.P., the drawings in which are evidently by the artists employed on the celebrated "Hours" of Anne of Brittany, in the Musée des Souverains at Paris, is an inserted leaf at the beginning, and another at the end of the volume, on each of which are the arms of Christoforo Madruzzi, who was born in 1512, made cardinal in 1542, and who died in 1578, and was probably the former owner of the volume. In the display of these arms we presume tin leaf was employed, as the metal is remarkable for its brightness, and is free from the tarnish we have always met with, in a greater or less degree, on the surfaces of the silver found in ancient drawings.

As the more unchangeable nature of tin does not appear to have led to its extensive use in the art of illumination, although for ages it had formed a leading feature in wall decorations; it may fairly be presumed that some practical difficulty attended its employment on vellum. The want of power to reduce it to a powder so nearly impalpable as could be effected with silver, may, from its want of delicacy of texture, have prevented its being employed in that shape; while its comparative want of flexibility may have proved an obstacle to its being beaten into leaves as thin, and as easily applied to the vellum, as the more malleable metal for which it would form a substitute.

As our plan is intended simply to describe the processes and materials

by which facsimiles of ancient illuminations or modern compositions, having their leading characteristics, may now be produced, it is unnecessary to describe from early authorities the methods then employed in the preparation of articles now belonging to commerce, and which no one at present need incur the labour of preparing for his own use. In fact, we would advise the student to avoid, rather than consult, these ancient writers, as their descriptions, although of great archæological value, are more likely to confuse than to instruct the practical artist.

Many of the names and terms employed by these authors are now unintelligible, and nearly all of them give long lists of colours, many of which are fugitive, and certainly were not employed on any drawings which have descended to our time, or, at least, have come under our observation. As the finer colours must always have been comparatively costly, and the less brilliant, and less permanent ones, are thus chronicled, the latter were probably employed on manuscripts of an inferior class, which have either perished, or, in their faded state, have not been considered worthy of preservation.

A cardinal error, we believe, prevails in the writings of nearly all these authors, namely, a want of discrimination between the pigments employed on illuminations only, and those used on walls, or on panels. Many colours fade rapidly when used with water, which, when applied in oil, or in tempera covered with a coating of varnish, preserve almost their pristine freshness for ages.

Theophilus, in writing "of the varnish gluten," says,— "Pour linseed oil into a small new pot, and add, very finely powdered, the gum which is called fornis, which has the appearance of the most lucid Thus, but when broken it yields a bright lustre. When you have placed which on the fire, cook carefully, so that it may not boil up, until a third part is consumed, and guard against the flame, because it is very dangerous, and extinguished with difficulty if it be raised. Every painting covered over with this gluten is made both beautiful and for ever durable."

Most of the writers of the present time who have produced books of instruction on the Art of Illumination, have enumerated nearly all the pigments now prepared, as a necessary stock to enable persons to colour modern drawings in imitation of those produced during the middle ages. We maintain, on the contrary, that a costly colour-box is by no means required for that purpose. The finest productions, especially of the early schools, were as remarkable for their simplicity, and for the few pigments employed on them, as for the care with which the artists selected the most brilliant and the most permanent.

We will give a single instance of the errors of authors who quote from their predecessors, either without practical knowledge, or without testing the truthfulness of the matter they quote as applicable to the purposes for which it is quoted. It is from Mr. Digby Wyatt's work, entitled, "The History, Theory, and Practice of Illuminating." In the latter division of his book, Mr. Wyatt describes the mode of preparing the materials and colours employed chiefly on the authority of Theophilus, and the collection of "Secreta," entitled, "The Mappæ Clavicula," or, "Little Key to Drawing," a manuscript treatise on the preparation of pigments, and on the various processes of the decorative arts practised during the middle ages, in the possession of Sir Thomas Phillipps, Bart. of Middle Hill, supposed to have been written about the time of Henry II.\* This manuscript, under two hundred and nine heads, treats not only of the composition of colours, but of a variety of other subjects, as, for instance, architecture, mensuration of altitudes, the art of war, &c. Among the recipes, in addition to those referring to pigments, are many relating to illuminating. Mr. Wyatt gives a translation of the names and properties of the different colours, which he considers "curious, as defining clearly what were the best and most important tints for illumination;" but, as we consider the majority of them more curious than useful, a list of them is unnecessary. He then proceeds,— "The mixture of colours appears to have been reduced to a perfect system, each hue having others specially adapted and used for heightening and lowering the pure tint; thus the author gives directions which are likely to be scarcely less useful to the illuminator of the present day than they were to those of old." Then follows the quotation:—

#### "OF MIXTURES.

" If, therefore, you should desire to know the natures and mixtures of these (the above alluded to) colours, and which are antagonistic to each other, lend your ear diligently.

" Mix azure with white lead, lower with indigo, heighten with white lead. Pure vermillion you may lower with brown or with dragon's blood, and heighten with orpiment. Mix vermillion with white lead, and make the colour which is called Rosa, lower it with vermillion, heighten it with white lead. Item, you may make a colour with dragon's blood and orpiment, which you may lower with brown, and heighten with orpiment. Yellow ochre

\* Published in extenso in the 32nd volume of the *Archæologia*, pp. 183, 244, with a letter from its owner.

you may lower with brown, and heighten with red lead (query, with white?) Item, you may make Rosam of yellow ochre and white lead, deepen with yellow ochre, heighten with white lead. Reddish purple (folium) may be lowered with brown, and heightened with white lead. Item, mix folium with white lead, lower with folium, and heighten with white lead. Orpiment may be lowered with vermillion, but cannot be heightened, because it stains all other colours."

Nearly all these colours being fugitive, it is needless to say that we know of no ancient illuminations in which such mixtures have been employed. White lead is a component part of nearly all of them, and it is notorious that the leads are amongst the most perishable of pigments; and that orpiment, which figures so frequently in them, has the bad quality attributed to it in the last passage of our quotation.

A paragraph follows on "tempering," and on "which colours are antagonistic." As we know that most of these pigments were antagonistic to their own existence, and frequently to that of their neighbours, it is unnecessary to allude further to the faults of the dear departed, beyond a caution to avoid practical acquaintance with any of their families.

It is not our purpose to make any attempt to trace the origin, or to define the chemical qualities, of the various colours employed in ancient art. It is sufficient for the object we profess to have in view to describe those which have borne the test of time under the ordinary adverse influences to which books are usually exposed; and to show that the same pigments may be procured at the present time. There can be little doubt that the larger portion, if not the whole of them, descended to us from the east, as we find them in works of the most remote ages; in the painted architecture and the papyri of the Egyptians on the enamels of Egypt and China, and also on most of the articles of luxury to which colour could be applied.

For the sake of simplicity we will take each colour separately, and describe the mode of its application. To begin with the most powerful and attractive of them all,—blue. In the earliest drawings ultramarine seems to have been universally employed, both for pictorial illuminations, and the large and small capital letters found in manuscripts. In the last it was sometimes used in an unmixed state, but having a somewhat heavy character in large masses, it was in such cases lowered to a tone that would bring it into harmony with the surrounding colours, by being mixed with a due proportion of white.

From the eleventh century, when the general use of flat tints gave way to the practice of shading the various features of a design, the appearance of roundness was given by the addition of white in increasing gradations from

the pure colour in its deepest tints to the highest lights which were produced by solid lines of the former. The French imitation of ultramarine is a combination of the substances found by chemical analysis to form the component parts of the lapis-lazuli, or real ultramarine; and is as rich in colour as the natural production and, we believe, as permanent.

Cobalt is another exceedingly beautiful blue, and came into early and extensive use, though not found in the oldest illuminations. It is transparent in texture, and lighter in colour than ultramarine. It was much employed for skies, light blue dresses, and other parts of a picture for which that pigment was considered to be of too dense and heavy a character. To give it substance white was added.

The next blue in importance is Prussian blue, also transparent. This blue was chiefly used for shading the various greens, and in many of the compound tints.

Indigo, likewise a transparent blue, was much employed on the deepest shadows of greens and in mixtures, but rarely formed a leading colour, except in Spanish drawings, to which, from its blackish purple tone, it imparts a heavy and gloomy character.

Of the reds, the most brilliant is that of carmine. Mr. Field, in his "Chromotography," says,—“It is very fugitive and changeable, and will, when secluded from light, air, and oxygen, continue for half a century.” All we can say is, that we have found it in a very fair state of preservation in the oldest drawings with which we are acquainted, and we have rarely met with any instance of its having perished, except from ill usage, unnecessary exposure, or its having been mixed with a fugitive white. On the fragments of four golden leaves, from a copy of the Eusebian canons, in the British Museum, figured in our “Illuminated Ornaments of the Middle Ages,” and supposed to be of the sixth century, a large portion of the details of the borders are of this colour; and we need hardly observe of how little value the finest works of the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries, especially those of the Italian school, would have been had this magnificent colour been generally limited to an existence of fifty years.

The mode of its employment was similar to that of ultramarine, namely, by the addition of white. No shadings of brown, or other inferior pigments, were allowed to overlay its natural purity.

Vermillion may have claimed the first rank among the reds, if precedence were given to age, as we find that the most ancient documents were rubricated with it, and it took a leading part in the coloured embellishments of all ages; though in a larger degree in early than in later times, when the glowing transparent colour above described became a greater favourite

than its rich and solid predecessor. When vermillion was shaded it was with carmine, and the union of these two colours is exceedingly striking and satisfactory, especially in heraldic drawings.

Venetian red is very useful in the composition of various browns, though too crude to be used alone.

Yellow is a colour which was employed but sparingly in illumination, at any time, and after the twelfth century it was, for mere ornamentations, almost entirely superseded by the use of gold.

The cromes, or crome and white, we have found to be the only pigments with which we could imitate these ancient tints. A yellow stain, however, is frequently found in manuscripts of a later time on the small capital letters of the text. Gamboge, or gamboge with a little crome, will answer this purpose.

Of the compound colours, we will first take purple. This may be produced, in all its gradations and varieties, by the combination of carmine, cobalt, or ultramarine, and white.

The preparation termed emerald is the most brilliant of all the greens. It is found in the earliest drawings in an admirable state of preservation, but from its light colour, and semi-opaque texture, it was frequently mixed with a small portion of white to give it body, and, when shaded, Prussian blue, or indigo was used for that purpose. A darker green is sometimes met with, which may be imitated by a mixture of crome yellow, Prussian blue, and white.

The orange colour used in early drawings is an opaque, and remarkably brilliant pigment. It may also rank as one of the most permanent. It appears constantly in the drawings of the celebrated copy of the Gospels in the British Museum, called the "Durham Book," executed in the beginning of the eighth century; and, with the exception of those on one or two pages which have been much exposed, it still retains its freshness in a most remarkable degree. This beautiful colour has been reproduced of late years.

A very charming tint is seen occasionally in drawings of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, which may be termed salmon colour. It may be compounded of crome yellow, carmine, orange, and white.

For grey colours, carmine, indigo, and white may be used. If a bright colour is required, a little cobalt may be substituted for the indigo. For a very dark grey mix carmine with lamp-black, Venetian red, and white.

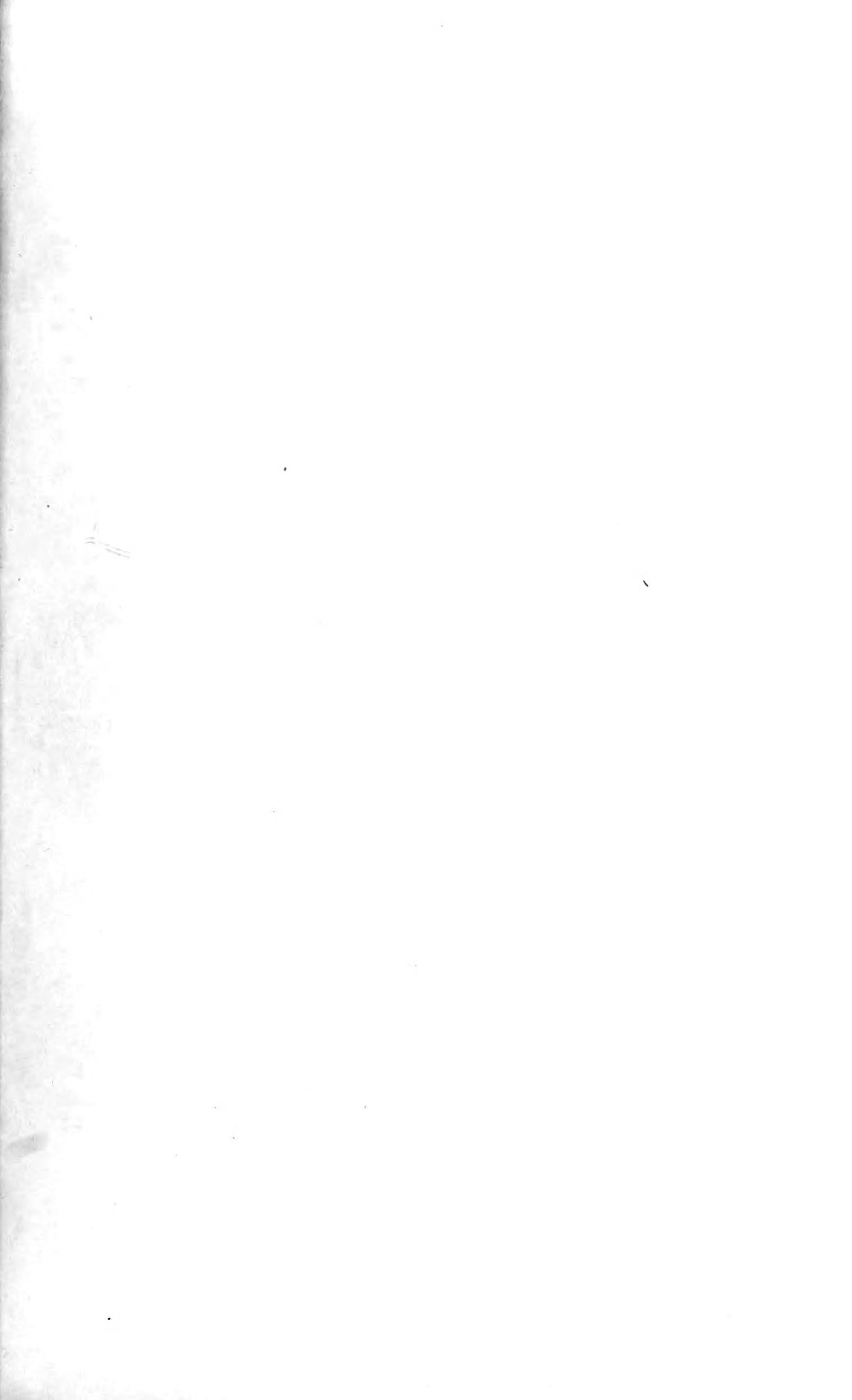
Browns of every tint used in illuminations may be imitated by the blending of crome yellow, Venetian red, vermillion, lamp-black, and white. A greenish brown is occasionally met with, for which we have employed crome, Venetian red, carmine, Prussian blue, and white.

The only black required is lamp-black, which was generally made more intense by the addition of gum.

We have left to the last the most important of all the pigments employed in the Art of Illumination, namely, white. This was not only used in its pure state to give brilliancy to the others, but was indispensable in forming their various gradations, as well as in the production of all the compound tints. It is, therefore, of the highest importance that it should be both pure and permanent. We have found more failures in ancient drawings from the use of fugitive white, probably white lead, than from any other cause. We would recommend for all purposes the employment of zinc white, which is the only one that can be depended upon as possessing these properties.

With regard to the brushes most suitable for illuminated drawings, we prefer those made of camel's hair to those of sable, as their softer texture enables us to apply the more solid pigments with a greater body, and consequent richness of effect, than can be done with the less flexible character of the latter. For the delicate lines of white and of gold, a fine brush should be selected, and the hairs reduced to a long taper form by passing a knife round the base of the quill.















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